UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
3 1822 01613 6608

rnia
al

LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA
SAN DIEGO

141-N
4 roth

Central University Library
University of California, San Diego
Note: This item is subject to recall after two weeks.

Date Due

MAY 09 1993
DEC 21 1998
JAN 21 REC'D

CI 39 (1/91) UCSD Lib.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/traitsstoriesofi01carliala

TRAITS AND STORIES OF

THE IRISH PEASANTRY

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. I

H. Carleton.

45403

TRAITS AND STORIES OF
THE IRISH PEASANTRY

BY

WILLIAM CARLETON

EDITED BY

D. J. O'DONOGHUE

LONDON
J. M. DENT AND CO.
NEW YORK: MACMILLAN AND CO.
MDCCCXCVI

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	vii
PREFACE TO THE FIRST SERIES	xxiv
AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION	xxvii
NED M'KEOWN	1
THE THREE TASKS	30
SHANE FADH'S WEDDING	67
LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE	112
THE STATION	154
AN ESSAY ON IRISH SWEARING	203

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PORTRAIT OF CARLETON . . . . . *Frontispiece*

(*From a Photograph hitherto unreproduced.*)

PAGE

HEADING TO NED M'KEOWN 1

(*By Phiz.*)

JACK MAGENNIS PLAYING CARDS WITH THE "DARK" GENTLEMAN 34

(*By Phiz.*)

JACK MAGENNIS AND THE BEAUTIFUL LADY . . 48

(*By Phiz.*)

THE RACE FOR THE BOTTLE 88

(*By Phiz.*)

DROPPING BILLY CORMICK INTO THE WELL . . 90

(*By Phiz.*)

INTRODUCTION

WILLIAM CARLETON is universally recognised as the greatest delineator of the manners and customs of the Irish peasantry. His "Traits and Stories" is not merely a work of remarkable literary merit. It has great historical value, and is a monument of national importance. It is incontestably the best of all his writings. It is unequal, it is often carelessly and roughly finished, and there are some badly-written passages; but still, taken as a whole, there is nothing in Irish literature within reasonable distance of it for completeness, variety, character-drawing, humour, pathos, and dramatic power. When Carleton gave these stories some necessary revision, about ten years after their first appearance, he did not do it thoroughly. There are still some excrescences, some useless digressions and preachings, and not a few violent outbursts which might with advantage be modified; but, such as they are, the "Traits and Stories" form an immortal picture of national life. The historical importance of the work lies in the fact that the Ireland of Carleton's early years no longer exists. The Ireland mirrored for all time in his pages is not the Ireland of our days. One may occasionally meet even yet an odd character, a quaint type, who seems to belong to such a vanished world as Carleton has pictured; but such types are now few and far between. In pre-famine and pre-Emancipation days they were common in every parish and every village—they kept up the distinctiveness of the race. But that time is long past. The mass of the people have lost most of the peculiarities, the characteristic qualities which are so well developed in the figures who move and live in the stories of Carleton. Not merely the lapse of time, but the

famine and the subsequent clearances are responsible for the radical change which has come over the people. In essentials, no doubt, Carleton's Ireland is the same as ours, but the typical peasant, the "genuine article," seems to have disappeared, or is fast disappearing, with his faction and party fights, his wakes and "patterns," his pipers and his native Gaelic. As an eulogist of Carleton has expressed it, the best of the older Ireland has vanished "in the swamps and savannahs of the Irish exile's distant home." It might be added that the courts and alleys of London and other great English cities have seen some of its last fading traces, and it has been but a memory or a tradition with the past and present generation of Irishmen. Carleton has preserved its image intact, and in his stories one may live again with the Ireland of the past. In no other writer do you get the Irish atmosphere so clearly, so unmistakably. There have been and are many admirable Irish novelists, but their transcripts of Irish peasant life seem the faintest outlines in comparison with the stern reality—the forcible truth of Carleton's descriptions. Their peasants are half English and their landscapes almost wholly so. Carleton is Irish through and through—intensely Irish, exclusively Irish.

He is not, however, a mere local chronicler, interesting (in the long-run) only to the limited audience of a single parish, or county, or province. He is a national historian—the historian of the people's lives from infancy to old age, concerning himself little with the events of the "world," as generally understood, but occupied with his task of depicting Irish life and Irish human nature. Average human nature abounds in his books. Every one sees that his personages are genuine creatures of flesh and blood, and not simply puppets or fanciful shadows. The contemporaries who saw the publication of the "Traits and Stories" were startled at the truth of the work, no less than at its graphic power, pathos, and humour; and they did not, perhaps, exaggerate its value when they compared its author in certain aspects to Shakespeare and Cervantes. Carleton's humour is quite as notable as any in modern literature, and is more nearly akin to that of Molière than to any one else's. The Irish novelist's methods of developing character are somewhat similar to those employed by the

French dramatist, and there is considerable resemblance between the pedants and the comic servants of both. The wheedlers, too, the "deludherers" of the "Traits and Stories," are not without their congeners in Molière's plays. The appearance of his work revealed a new world of life and of fantasy to the astonished public of 1830–33. Even France and Germany were interested; and in England Carleton was unreservedly praised, and his stories recommended to the perusal of those who wished to *know* the Irish people. In America Carleton's popularity has always been very great.

He has been called the "prose Burns," and the description is fairly exact. He had the same knowledge of his countrymen, the same intense love of nature (witness "Tubber Derg" and many other examples), the same sympathy for humanity, and almost the same deep poetical feeling. The literary comparison need not be pursued further; but he resembled Burns in being, like him, a peasant, and his life presents other points of similarity to that of the Ayrshire poet. Carleton also reminds one not a little of Goldsmith. Some of his glimpses of rustic gatherings and smiling homesteads are quite in the Goldsmith manner. But he did not choose to let his mind dwell for long upon the brighter and joyous side of Irish life; his personal sorrows were poignant throughout the greater part of his career, and his writings are strongly coloured by them. No other Irish writer is quite his equal in the description of appalling calamity. There are terrible scenes in these "Traits and Stories," which are probably the least gloomy of his writings, as they are almost his earliest. But they are insignificant and tame compared to the famine scenes of "The Black Prophet," which are Dantean in intensity and accumulated horror. His dramatic power is always notable—and here especially.

In supreme moments Carleton exhibits strong imagination, but, in general, it must be confessed that it is to his memory we owe most of his best work. He described what he had actually *seen*—rarely inventing his incidents. When eventually the stores of his memory were exhausted, when the stock of quaint types and moving experiences had run out, his books became almost unreadable. The strength of his

memory explains the value of his earlier work. In the faculty of reproducing the scenes of his youth, the habits and speech of the people (every turn of whose phraseology he renders with unfailing accuracy), he was without a competitor. His was not the somewhat too common mimetic gift—no dialect is more difficult to reproduce with exactness than that which is used with such humour and expressiveness by the Irish peasant—all English writers and many Irish ones fail in their efforts to catch the genuine Irish idiom, the former lamentably, the latter almost as unmistakably. Carleton is supreme in this respect. No novelist ever had precisely his opportunities for acquiring the idiom, and it was indelibly stamped upon his memory. He was always a peasant, and, until he was thirty years of age, may be said to have lived exclusively with the peasant world which he has made his own peculiar sphere. His command of the Irish phraseology is the more remarkable in that he only knew the North and North-East of Ireland; yet his peasant dialect holds good for the whole island. This gift of his is a highly valuable one, as Irish readers alone can testify. The accent of old Ireland is more truly and faithfully preserved in the "Traits and Stories" than if it were treasured up in the most perfect of phonographs, and it is in his pages that it can be studied to most advantage by the writers who despair of ever recording it correctly. So far as that part of the necessary equipment of an Irish novelist goes, Carleton was perfect, and in dialect never makes a false step. But he made many mistakes in other matters. The strong prejudice against him which is undoubtedly entertained by many Irishmen is not without its justification—there is no denying the fact that he sometimes abused his opportunities; and his occasional offences against truth and fairness cannot be condoned, for his knowledge of the Irish people was too complete to admit of the excuse that he unwittingly sinned. He burlesqued some of the most cherished convictions of his countrymen for a temporary gain. His very earliest stories were written for a very active group of Protestant evangelisers, who paid him well, and these stories are of so proselytising a tendency that nobody would dream of reprinting them or of describing them as literature. At a later period he turned and rent his Protestant patrons, and wrote exclusively for a

Catholic publisher, and in like manner, after a period of preaching to the Irish tenants on their enormities, he took the landlords and agents in hand and ruthlessly exposed their nefarious practices. His poverty explains a good deal of his tergiversation, but it hardly excuses it. Outbursts of occasional misrepresentation cannot, however, obliterate his great services to Ireland, and in the main there is no picture of Irish life so true as that presented in his "Traits and Stories." His pathos is no less irresistible than his humour. He is easily first among Irish writers in both qualities. Only one of his competitors, in the present writer's opinion, has come near to equalling Carleton's power over the emotions. That writer is Charles Kickham, in his affecting and beautiful stories of "Sally Cavanagh, or the Untenanted Graves," and "Knocknagow, or the Homes of Tipperary." But there is this difference (all important from the Irish point of view) between Kickham and Carleton—the former never, in any of his stories, by direct word or insinuation, maligned his countrymen in the smallest degree, and is consequently dear to the Irish heart; while Carleton, who often, in his literary career, wounded the susceptibilities of the people, is only partially read and admired by them. Even in those stories where he has glorified their virtues most, he has vexed them sorely by his fierce insistence upon their errors. He regarded himself as a writer with a mission to reform them. For every Irish virtue he has managed to discover a corresponding vice — his detractors would say a couple of vices. Yet it is Carleton's thoroughness and ruthlessness which make his descriptions of the national life so valuable. Future ages will not condemn severely the pen which, while it has given us a gallery of murderous ruffians like Andy Meehan, Darby Hourigan, Mogue Moylan, Bartle Flanagan, and Paddy Devaun, has also bequeathed to us such sublime types of Irish goodness, generosity, and gentleness as Owen M'Carthy, Jemmy M'Evoy, Mr. and Mrs. Denis O'Shaughnessy, and Elish Connell. To the same brain which conceived the M'Clutchys, the M'Slimes, the Donnell Dhus, and the Hogans, we owe Fardorougha and his heroic wife, Mave Sullivan, Sarah M'Gowan, Mrs. M'Mahon, and, to name but one other, the patriarch in "The Emigrants of Ahadarra."

Add to these the innumerable comic figures, the pedants, the pugnacious tailors, the impostors like Darby More, and you have an unmatchable gallery of national characters.

Considerations of space prevent me from going closely or minutely into Carleton's life history. All that can be conveniently done is to narrate the really important events of his career as briefly as may be. He has himself supplied us with an interesting account of his earlier years, which requires only to be supplemented by one or two points, which are not without their importance. His autobiographical preface is light-hearted enough, as though he had never known sorrow; yet when he wrote it he had been visited, if not chastened, by many afflictions. His life was less happy than many which are frequently considered mournful in the extreme. It was a bitter and ceaseless struggle from the moment he left home till his death. His writings in many places are tragically suggestive of ruined hopes and pitiful necessities.

He was born on 20th February 1794, in the parish of Clogher, Co. Tyrone, and was the youngest of fourteen children. His parents were good and pious people, of pure Celtic origin. The Carletons were originally Carolans and O'Carolans, and the English language was foreign to Carleton's immediate relatives. Changes of name were quite common in the last century. It is only a couple of centuries since Acts of Parliament passed making it compulsory upon the natives to adopt English names. Carleton was well aware of his original name, and often spoke of it to his friends, and Dr. John O'Donovan, greatest of Irish Gaelic scholars, introduces his case, as an illustration of change, into his learned papers on "The Origin and Meaning of Irish Family Names." Carleton was, luckily, born just after the time when it was impossible for Catholic youth to get education except in a surreptitious manner, when, indeed, as an Irish poet has pointedly expressed it—

> "Crouched beneath the sheltering hedge, or stretched
> on mountain fern,
> The master and his pupils met, *feloniously to learn!*"

But his own educational difficulties were not slight, apart from the poverty of his parents. Having been intended by

his father for the priesthood, he was considered to be on a different plane from his brothers, and any suggestion that he should occupy himself with manual labour was voted an unworthy and disgraceful one, and with this view Carleton himself was in emphatic agreement. After his father died he lived in complete idleness for several years, staying for a month or two with each of his relatives, his family being too poor to support him. It was essential, as he had "the larnin'," that he should be well dressed; but his relatives eventually grew weary of keeping him supplied with money while he spent all his time in sports and pastimes. He became an intrepid athlete, a famous dancer, and something of a fighter, and was known for miles round for agility and strength. He was tall and well formed, and, according to tradition and to the lengthy narrative of his life which he wrote during the months immediately preceding his death, was an immense favourite with the fair sex. He was also an excellent story-teller, and retailed far and near the stories which he had picked up at different firesides. The stories, however, which were most popular were those he had learned in his reading of the classics, and, as he states, the Irish legends were considered less interesting, because they "did not show the larnin'."

After he left his native hills, he wandered about the country endeavouring to obtain a tutorship. He was often in direst poverty, and such tutorships as he procured were miserable situations. He attempted to run a hedge-school on his own account, but after a short and most wretched experience of the trials of a hedge-schoolmaster, was forced to give it up. On one occasion his prospects were so blank that he thought of enlisting, and with that view wrote a letter in Latin to the colonel of a regiment, near whose quarters he happened to pass, requesting to be accepted as a recruit. The good-natured officer dissuaded him from his intention, and gave him some sorely-needed monetary help. The goal of his wanderings was Dublin, where he imagined his troubles would be ended. Yet he was many months in Dublin seeking in vain for employment, and dependent upon the charity of such good Samaritans as he might happen to meet. In despair he once presented himself at a bird-stuffing establishment

where a bird-stuffer was required, and announced himself as a competent hand at the trade; but when asked what he stuffed birds with, his innocent reply was "potatoes and meal." He did not secure, it is unnecessary to remark, the coveted appointment.

Through the friendly offices of a clergyman who discerned his ability, he managed to get a small post as teacher at a school kept by a man named Fox, with whose niece, a young lady named Jane Anderson, Carleton fell in love, and soon married. She proved a devoted and altogether admirable wife during their long married life. After a year or two spent as a clerk in the offices of the Irish Sunday School Society, Carleton began to realise that he possessed literary talent, and ceased to consider a clerkship worth £60 a year (which at first had seemed boundless wealth to him) as the legitimate summit of his ambition. Certain small character sketches which he had amused himself by writing, were loudly praised by his friends, and he was not long in discovering the opening his peculiar abilities looked for. He was introduced just at this time (1827) to the Rev. Cæsar Otway, author of some useful topographical books, who was then editing a religious magazine called the *Christian Examiner*. Otway was a shrewd observer, and recognised at once Carleton's vigorous intellect and his possible usefulness as a contributor. He urged him to write his experiences of peasant life, and offered to accept anything from his pen which treated of the "superstitions" of the people. Being at the time unemployed, having been dismissed from the Sunday School Society for daring to use it as a stepping-stone to entrance into Dublin University, Carleton readily accepted Otway's overtures, and sent as a first contribution an account of a visit he had paid to the famous penitential retreat of Lough Derg. "The Lough Derg Pilgrim" appeared in Otway's magazine for 1828, and was much admired by its readers. It was followed by a much inferior sketch named "Father Butler," and the two pieces were republished in a small volume in 1829.

Meanwhile Carleton went on, contributing to almost every number of the magazine. Everything he sent to it, however, was of a strictly Protestant tendency, and he reserved his

best work for the first series of the "Traits and Stories," which came out in two volumes in 1830.

Only those stories in this series which treat of the purely devotional side of the people in a sarcastic or severe spirit appeared in *The Christian Examiner.* The rest had never been published in any serial form when the two volumes above mentioned were issued. The work met with instant and almost universal delight and approbation. Their author was hailed as the discoverer of a new world, and indeed the life presented to English readers in Carleton's pages was entirely new and strange.

After 1831 Carleton ceased to write for the *Christian Examiner.* His last contribution was "Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth," which the editor compressed and mutilated. Carleton was now in a position which justified him in seeking to obtain a more remunerative market for his writings than Otway's periodical could give him, and, as it was bitterly and venomously opposed to all and any concessions to the Catholics, it is well that Carleton sought a broader atmosphere, and declined to continue providing what proved to be mere ammunition for the narrowest sect of Irish Protestants. It is a most curious coincidence that, though the *Christian Examiner* lived for nearly forty years afterwards, it died almost precisely at the same date as Carleton. Its final number contains a lengthy obituary notice of its most famous contributor.

To the *National Magazine,* started in 1830, under the editorship of Charles Lever, then an unknown young student at Trinity College, Carleton contributed some excellent and racy stories, which are not so well known as they should be. The magazine was, unfortunately, a short-lived one. It was owned by the same class of sectarians who controlled the *Christian Examiner,* and Lever so shocked them by his temerity in eulogising the poems of Shelley that he was incontinently removed from the editorship, and a pious and dull bookseller and author, named Philip Dixon Hardy, installed in his place, who speedily compassed the extinction of the magazine. Enthusiastic as was the applause won by the first series of "Traits and Stories," the second series (published in 1833) was even more flatteringly received. The three volumes,

including as they did "The Poor Scholar," "Denis O'Shaughnessy," "The Geography of an Irish Oath," and "Tubber Derg," were admitted to be the most notable accession ever made to Irish literature. Even in the first series Carleton had shown his mastery of his subject, but neither there nor anywhere else was he able to give such analysis of Irish human nature, or to exhibit such penetrating pathos, such ineffable tenderness, such sunny humour and keen-witted observation. "The author is a jewel," enthusiastically exclaimed Christopher North in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and all the other critics concurred. Is it wonderful that Carleton, with all his impulsiveness and buoyancy, instantly leaped to the conclusion that fame and fortune were within his easy reach? Fame he secured with perfect readiness; but fortune, alas! he never obtained. Unfortunately for him, authors were badly remunerated in Ireland, and as he had a large and increasing family growing up around him he quickly got into debt. He had the mortification all his life of seeing his books running through numerous editions while he himself reaped no benefit from their popularity. He was entirely without business capacity, and was constitutionally incapable of making a good bargain for himself. His present necessities were always such that the most insignificant sum paid down was worth far more to him than the most pleasing prospect of handsome remuneration in the near future.

When the *Dublin University Magazine*, the best literary periodical Ireland has ever had, was launched in 1833, Carleton was one of the band of brilliant writers who were enlisted as contributors, and in this instance, at any rate, he had no reason to complain of the terms paid. But he could not monopolise the space at the disposal of the editor, and remuneration for one contribution a month, the most he could expect to obtain, was insufficient for his needs. When, however, as often happened, his contributions were few and far between, his financial position may be guessed. It was the only decent magazine in the country, and he had no knowledge of English periodicals. He was only able to procure reasonable payment for his stories by arranging for their serial publication first. Consequently for several years he depended upon his work for the *University Magazine*, and the

debts which hung round his neck like millstones during the whole of his life were thus incurred. It must be confessed, nevertheless, that Carleton was blamable for much of his poverty. He was notoriously lacking in energy and method, and was soon disheartened. He needed little excuse to throw down his pen, never writing for love of the employment, but as a painful necessity. There are considerable intervals between the dates of some of his books. For the first few years of his literary career he confined himself to short stories and sketches of character, and some of his friends rather too hastily assumed that a properly-constructed novel was beyond his powers. Carleton had sufficient confidence in himself to strongly dissent from such an assumption, and in answer to a direct challenge he wrote "Fardorougha the Miser, or the Convicts of Lisnamona," which ran through the *University Magazine* as a serial in 1837–38, and was published as a book in 1839. This graphic and masterly story took his critics by surprise, and they at once admitted that Carleton was thoroughly justified in his attempt at novel-writing. "Fardorougha" is now properly ranked among the best of Irish novels. It is a most impressive and powerful study of the struggle between avarice and parental affection, the leading figure being a finely-conceived and wonderfully well-drawn portrait of an old Irish farmer, whose wife, Honor O'Donovan, is a noble creation, equalling the best of Carleton's female characters—which is high praise, for no Irish novelist is his equal in that respect.

Owing to a quarrel with Lever, who became editor of the *University Magazine*, Carleton ceased to write for it for some years. Indeed, he did not contribute a line while Lever retained the editorship. With the exception of some admirable sketches which appeared in 1840–41 in the *Irish Penny Journal*, he published very little between 1839 and 1845 worth mentioning. But he was not idle. The foundation in 1842 of the famous *Nation* newspaper by the Young Irelanders, with whose leaders Carleton was on terms of intimacy, encouraged him to write *for* the people as well as of them, and he was induced to write a story exhibiting in drastic fashion the more tyrannous methods employed by land agents and Orangemen. This story was intended for publication in the

Nation first, but, acting on the advice of the editors, it was issued as a book at once, with illustrations by "Phiz." Its title is somewhat too demonstrative, and "Valentine M'Clutchy, the Irish Land Agent, and the Pious Aspirations of Solomon M'Slime, Religious Attorney," does not suggest the impartial spirit. It must be confessed that Carleton's object is defeated by his partisanship. The oppressors of the people are too uniformly villainous—their cruelty and hypocrisy are inhuman. If, however, the novel contains some of his worst work, it also contains some of his best. There is admirable humour in some of the chapters; and as for the pathos, his description of an eviction scene is one of the most moving things he ever wrote. "Valentine M'Clutchy" appeared in 1845, and was hailed by the national press as not merely a great novel, but as an excellent propagandist work. A library of small monthly volumes was projected by the Young Irelanders, to be called "The Library of Ireland," and Carleton was invited to help. He speedily produced "Rody the Rover, or the Ribbonman," a story with a purpose, that purpose being the denunciation of the secret societies and conspiracies too much favoured by the people. He afterwards claimed that this little and unimportant book caused the disbandment of six hundred Ribbon lodges. The year which saw the publication of the two last-mentioned books was the busiest of Carleton's life. His sketches in the *Irish Penny Journal*, already referred to, were collected and published with others in a volume, for which "Phiz" furnished several characteristic illustrations. These "Tales and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" became deservedly popular, and are almost as valuable in their way as the "Traits and Stories."

The death, in September 1845, of Thomas Davis, the best beloved of all the Young Irelanders, led to a request from the editors of "The Library of Ireland" for a volunteer who would provide the November volume of the series, which Davis had been preparing when death struck him down. Carleton, who could write at fever-heat under favourable conditions, at once stepped into the breach, and in nine days wrote the story of "Paddy Go Easy and his wife Nancy," a work intended to have an educational effect. It is a study of an abnormally lazy man who is eventually reformed and

regenerated by an active and methodical wife. There is considerable humour in it; but the Irish people resented the undoubted implication that they were all Paddy Go Easys, and the book, useful and interesting as it is, has never been a favourite with the Irish reader.

In spite of this burst of literary activity, Carleton's debts did not diminish; and though he followed "hot-foot" with "Art Maguire, or the Broken Pledge," a powerful story designed to help Father Mathew's temperance crusade, "The Black Prophet," a thrilling story of famine, and "The Emigrants of Ahadarra," one of his most admirable stories, his necessities soon became a matter of public comment. He had previously, on the death of John Banim, endeavoured to secure the reversion of the Civil List pension held by that writer, but Sir Robert Peel, though he characteristically and generously aided Carleton out of his own purse, declined to recommend him for a pension. In 1847 a movement was started in Dublin to bring Carleton's case under the notice of Lord John Russell, then Prime Minister. It was warmly supported on all hands, by people of all grades, and of every shade of political and religious opinion. Almost every notable person in Ireland signed the memorial which was presented to the Premier, and the appeal was strongly backed by Lord Clarendon, the Viceroy. Lord John Russell acceded to it, and in 1848 Carleton was granted a pension of £200 a year. From that moment, strangely enough, his decadence as a writer may be followed step by step. "The Tithe Proctor," published in 1848, is unworthy of the author of "Traits and Stories," and those novels which followed it were even less worthy. The fount of his genius seems to have become suddenly exhausted, and though there are occasional glimpses of his earlier self in these later books, they serve only to remind one of his former greatness. They may be dismissed in a few words. "The Squanders of Castle Squander" was first published in the *Illustrated London News*, and appeared in book form in 1852; "Red Hall, or the Baronet's Daughter" (afterwards republished as "The Black Baronet"), was also published in London in 1852, and was the cause of Carleton's one visit to that city. "Willy Reilly and his dear Colleen Bawn," issued in 1855, is the most

popular of all Carleton's novels. It has passed through nearly fifty editions, but, notwithstanding, is inferior in workmanship and *vraisemblance* to most of his books. In 1860 appeared "The Evil Eye, or the Black Spectre," which, though speedily translated into French, is absolutely the weakest of all his writings. "Redmond Count O'Hanlon, the Irish Rapparee," "The Double Prophecy, or Trials of the Heart," and "The Red-Haired Man's Wife," exhaust the list of his novels; but there are various short stories belonging to this later period, which need not be particularised, as they are of comparatively little importance. Being in possession of a settled income of £200 a year, it was characteristic of Carleton that he took no trouble with these stories, but apparently allowed his pen to wander over the paper without method or plan. His fame has suffered heavily by this carelessness; for, as the better books became inaccessible to the people, in spite of many editions, these worthless stories were read by them simply because they were procurable at a cheap price, and are more or less free from the gibes at the clergy in which Carleton revelled in his younger days. It must not be supposed that the pension placed him beyond the reach of poverty. He was always in extreme difficulties, and his literary earnings after 1848 may be estimated at about £50 a year on the average. With this £250 a year Carleton was obliged to keep a large family, who not only could not assist him in any way, but, owing to his intense affection for his own flesh and blood, added their own burdens to his. He could not bear to see any of his children leave him to seek their own fortunes, and, by mistaken kindness, succeeded in preventing them from ever helping him or themselves. His love of his family, a notable characteristic of Irish people, is almost incredible. When two of his daughters married, they left him only for a few years. Becoming widows, they returned to the paternal home with their children, where their father welcomed them with emotion and delight. His eldest son, a thriftless fellow, also married, and his wife and children were for a time quartered upon the tender-hearted old man. His letters to his children are brimming with affection and solicitude. It is extremely difficult to find a harsh word for his amiable weakness towards his family; but Carleton was

never tired of lamenting and resenting what he called the indifference of the Irish public to his necessities. Several times he endeavoured to obtain an increase of pension, but in vain; there was little sympathy for a writer who was already receiving what was comparatively a large pension.

In his latter days Carleton became infirm, and his once-powerful frame was bent by privation and illness. He spent the last few months of his life in writing his autobiography, which he was not able to complete. When he died, on 30th Jan. 1869, the newspapers, which had very sympathetically received the news of his last illness, devoted a good deal of their space to the consideration of his many services to Ireland, and his funeral was followed by some of the leading citizens of Dublin. His widow, to whom a portion of his pension was continued, survived him for more than twelve years, and several of his children are still living in England and Australia.

Carleton has often been called "the Walter Scott of Ireland," and the title is not inappropriate in certain respects. His head was strikingly like Scott's, and the remarkable resemblance was instantly observed by such of his earlier contemporaries who had seen the great Scotchman. Carleton himself was very proud of the likeness, and felt highly flattered when it was pointed out.

Carleton gets completely "out of his depth" when he endeavours to describe genteel life. One or two of his stories, such as "The Black Baronet," are most unconvincing and unreadable on this account. When he confines himself to peasant life and character he is, when he likes, unerring and sure; but he deliberately goes out of his way on occasions to please the particular section with which, for the time being, he may have identified himself. Therein lies his gravest defect and the cause of that prejudice which, as previously mentioned, exists in the minds of many Irishmen against him. The fact of his poverty is the only explanation which can be offered as an excuse for this defect. He wrote for this party or that because he was in need of money; and as it is the misfortune of Irishmen that they must connect themselves more or less actively with one party or another, Carleton, who was nothing if not vehement,

and upon whichever side he wrote, wrote aggressively, strongly supported whatever party or sect he had elected to serve. He was never a Nationalist in the modern and restricted sense—he always considered himself a Conservative, politically; but he was Irish first and last. Carleton regretted in later years many of the remarks into which he had been led by his partisanship, and, as far as was possible at the time, excised the more flagrant passages. But he readily recognised that further pruning was called for, especially in his later works. He is fond of introducing "asides," which are read nowadays with irritation by all parties, as they tend not only to distract the attention and to interrupt the narrative, but fail to convince, as the opinions he expresses in one book are diametrically opposed to those stated in another. The "Traits and Stories," even as revised by Carleton in 1843, are not irreproachable. His life-long complaint that the Irish people did not appreciate him, has no foundation in fact: they bought his books and read them, and cannot be blamed for the bad bargains he made with his publishers. It is not wonderful if his rightful public did not know how to "take" him—his frequent veerings necessarily confusing the popular mind.

Though less than justice is meted out to the clergy in his "Traits and Stories," it must be admitted that, in general, he champions the cause of his countrymen in that work. His vigorous personality is in all he wrote, and his writings are good or bad according as they are influenced by his amiable or unamiable periods. In "Valentine M'Clutchy," for example, there is gross party spirit, and all his fierceness is directed against landlordism; while "The Tithe Proctor" is disfigured beyond redemption by its virulence against the popular movement for the abolition of tithes.

Theophile Gautier says of Goya, the Spanish artist, that he seems to have come expressly at the right moment to collect the last vestiges of the ancient manners and customs of his people, which were on the point of disappearing for ever. The same may be said of Carleton, who has limned in imperishable colours the Ireland of his youth, whose last glimpses he has caught in the main and faithfully recorded. It is impossible to over-estimate the utility and educational

value of the "Traits and Stories." We may adopt the words of one of his earliest and best critics, "No man who does not know the things he tells, knows Ireland—no man who knows it ever doubted the perfection of the 'Traits and Stories.'"

D. J. O'DONOGHUE.

P.S.—As Carleton's Irish Gaelic phrases are generally hopelessly corrupt, it has been thought best to give them as they stand in the glossary, with the true spelling in brackets, and the English translation after them. He attempted vainly to give the phonetic spelling of the Gaelic words, and his attempt has led to much confusion among Irish readers without assisting English ones. I have to acknowledge, with much gratitude, the kindness of Mr. David Comyn, of Dublin, a well-known student of Gaelic (and first editor of *The Gaelic Journal*), who prepared the glossary, and has helped me in other ways.

A few words about the known portraits of Carleton seem necessary. Unquestionably the best of them is that prefixed to the present volume. It proves that the well-known half-length portrait by Slattery, which is in the National Gallery, Dublin, is an excellent likeness. It is Carleton "to the very life," as those who knew him will readily recognise, and has never been reproduced before. There is a later portrait of him taken in extreme old age, which is much less characteristic. The sketch by Charles Grey, which is given as frontispiece to another volume of this edition, has been several times used, but it is an admirable portrait of Carleton in his prime. The absurdly unlike portrait by William Roe, which has been reproduced as a frontispiece to one of the cheap editions of the "Traits and Stories," hardly calls for mention in this list. It has not even a remote resemblance to the novelist.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST SERIES

IN presenting the following "Traits and Stories" to the public, the Author can with confidence assure them that what he offers is, both in manufacture and material, genuine Irish; yes, genuine Irish as to character, drawn by one born amidst the scenes he describes—reared as one of the people whose characters and situations he sketches—and who can cut and dress a shillaly as well as any man in his Majesty's dominions—ay, and use it too; so let the critics take care of themselves. Conversant with the pastimes, festivals, feasts, and feuds he details, he may well say of what he has described, "*quorum pars magna fui.*" Moreover, the Author assumes that in the ground he has taken he stands in a great measure without a competitor; particularly as to certain sketches peculiar, in the habits and manners delineated in them, to the Northern Irish. These last—the Ulster Creachts, as they were formerly called—are as characteristically distinct from the Southern or Western Milesians as the people of Yorkshire are from the natives of Somerset; yet they are still as Irish, and as strongly imbued with the character of their country. The English reader, perhaps, may be sceptical as to the deep hatred which prevails among Roman Catholics in the north of Ireland against those who differ from them in party and religious principles; but when he reflects that they were driven before the face of the Scotch invader, and divested by the settlement of Ulster of their pleasant vales, forced to quench their fires on their fathers' hearths, and retire to the mountain ranges of Tyrone, Donegal, and Derry, perhaps he will grant, after all, that the

feeling is natural to a people treated as they have been. Among this race, surrounded by Scotch and English settlers, and hid amongst the mists of their highland retreats, education, until recently, had made little progress: superstition, and prejudice, and ancient animosity held their strongest sway; and the priests, the poor pastors of a poorer people, were devoid of the wealth, the self-respect, and the learning which prevailed amongst their better endowed brethren of the south.

The Author, in the different scenes and characters he describes, has endeavoured to give his portraits as true to nature as possible; and requests his readers to give him credit when he asserts that, without party object or engagement, he disclaims subserviency to any political purpose whatsoever. His desire is neither to distort his countrymen into demons, nor to enshrine them as suffering innocents and saints, but to exhibit them as they really are—warm-hearted, hot-headed, affectionate creatures—the very fittest materials in the world for either the poet or agitator—capable of great culpability, and of great and energetic goodness—sudden in their passions as the red and rapid gush of their mountain-streams—variable in their temper as the climate that sends them the mutability of sun and shower—at times rugged and gloomy as the moorland sides of their mountains—often sweet, soft, and gay as the sun-lit meadows of their pleasant vales.

The Author—though sometimes forced to touch upon their vices, expose their errors, and laugh at their superstitions—loves also (and it has formed, as he may say, the pleasure of his pen) to call up their happier qualities, to exhibit them as candid, affectionate, and faithful. Nor has he ever foregone the hope—his heart's desire and his anxious wish—that his own dear native mountain people may, through the influence of education, by the leadings of purer knowledge, and by the fosterings of a paternal Government, become the pride, the strength, and support of the British Empire, instead of, as now, forming its reproach.

The reader may finally believe that these volumes contain probably a greater number of facts than any other book ever published on Irish life. The Author's acquaintance with the

people was so intimate and extensive, and the state of Ireland so unsettled, that he had only to take incidents which occurred under his eye, and, by fictitious names and localities, exhibit through their medium the very prejudices and manners which produced the incidents themselves.

In the language and expressions of the northern peasantry he has studiously avoided that intolerable Scoto-Hibernic jargon which pierces the ear so unmercifully; but he has preserved everything Irish, and generalised the phraseology, so that the book, wherever it may go, will exhibit a truly Hibernian spirit.

It depends on the patronage which the public may bestow on these volumes whether other attempts, made under circumstances less discouraging, and for which there are ample materials, calculated to exhibit Irish life in a manner, perhaps, more practically useful, shall be proceeded with.

DUBLIN, 1*st March*, 1830.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

IT will naturally be expected, upon a new issue of works which may be said to treat exclusively of a people who form such an important and interesting portion of the empire as the Irish peasantry do, that the Author should endeavour to prepare the minds of his readers—especially those of the English and Scotch—for understanding more clearly their general character, habits of thought, and modes of feeling as they exist and are depicted in the subsequent volume. This is a task which the Author undertakes more for the sake of his country than himself; and he rejoices that the demand for the present edition puts it in his power to aid in removing many absurd prejudices which have existed for time immemorial against his countrymen.

It is well known that the character of an Irishman has been hitherto uniformly associated with the idea of something unusually ridiculous, and that scarcely anything in the shape of language was supposed to proceed from his lips but an absurd *congeries* of brogue and blunder. The habit of looking upon him in a ludicrous light has been so strongly impressed upon the English mind, that no opportunity has ever been omitted of throwing him into an attitude of gross and overcharged caricature, from which you might as correctly estimate his intellectual strength and moral porportions as you would the size of a man from his evening shadow. From the immortal bard of Avon down to the writers of the present day, neither play nor farce has ever been presented to Englishmen, in which, when an Irishman *is* introduced, he is not drawn as a broad, grotesque blunderer, every sentence he speaks involving a bull, and every act the result of headlong folly, or cool but unstudied effrontery. I do not remember an

instance in which he acts upon the stage any other part than that of the buffoon of the piece, uttering language which, wherever it may have been found, was at all events never heard in Ireland, unless upon the boards of a theatre. As for the Captain O'Cutters, O'Blunders, and Dennis Bulgrudderies of the English stage, they never had existence except in the imagination of those who were as ignorant of the Irish people as they were of their language and feelings. Even Sheridan himself was forced to pander to this erroneous estimate and distorted conception of our character; for, after all, Sir Lucius O'Trigger was *his* Irishman, but not Ireland's Irishman. I know that several of my readers may remind me of Sir Boyle Roche, whose bulls have become not only notorious, but proverbial. It is well known now, however, and was when he made them, that they were studied bulls, resorted to principally for the purpose of putting the Government and Opposition sides of the Irish House of Commons into good-humour with each other, which they never failed to do — thereby, on more occasions than one, probably, preventing the effusion of blood and the loss of life among men who frequently decided even their political differences by the sword or pistol.

That the Irish either were or are a people remarkable for making bulls or blunders, is an imputation utterly unfounded, and in every sense untrue. The source of this error on the part of our neighbours is, however, readily traced. The language of our people has been for centuries, and is up to the present day, in a transition state. The English tongue is gradually superseding the Irish. In my own native place, for instance, there is not by any means so much Irish spoken now as there was about twenty or five-and-twenty years ago. This fact, then, will easily account for the ridicule which is, and I fear ever will be, unjustly heaped upon those who are found to use a language which they do not properly understand. In the early periods of communication between the countries, when they stood in a hostile relation to each other, and even long afterwards, it was not surprising that "the wild Irishman" who expressed himself with difficulty, and often impressed the idiom of his own language upon one with which he was not familiar, should incur, in the opinion of

those who were strongly prejudiced against him, the character of making the bulls and blunders attributed to him. Such was the fact, and such the origin of this national slander upon his intellect—a slander which, like every other, originates from the prejudice of those who were unacquainted with the quickness and clearness of thought that in general characterises the language of our people. At this moment there is no man acquainted with the inhabitants of the two countries who does not know that where the English *is* vernacular in Ireland it is spoken with far more purity and grammatical precision than is to be heard beyond the Channel. Those, then, who are in the habit of defending what are termed our bulls, or of apologising for them, do us injustice; and Miss Edgeworth herself, when writing an essay upon the subject, wrote an essay upon that which does not and never did exist. These observations, then, easily account for the view of us which has always been taken in the dramatic portion of English literature. There the Irishman was drawn in every instance as the object of ridicule, and consequently of contempt; for it is incontrovertibly true, that the man whom you laugh at you will soon despise.

In every point of view this was wrong, but principally in a political one. At that time England and Englishmen knew very little of Ireland, and consequently the principal opportunities afforded them of appreciating our character were found on the stage. Of course, it was very natural that the erroneous estimate of us which they formed there should influence them everywhere else. We cannot sympathise with and laugh at the same object at the same time; and if the Irishman found himself undeservedly the object of coarse and unjust ridicule, it was not very unnatural that he should requite it with a prejudice against the principles and feelings of Englishmen, quite as strong as that which was entertained against himself. Had this ridicule been confined to the stage, or directed at us in the presence of those who had other and better opportunities of knowing us, it would have been comparatively harmless. But this was not the case. It passed from the stage into the recesses of private life, wrought itself into the feelings until it became a prejudice, and the Irishman was consequently looked upon and

treated as a being made up of absurdity and cunning—a compound of knave and fool, fit only to be punished for his knavery or laughed at for his folly. So far, therefore, that portion of English literature which attempted to describe the language and habits of Irishmen was unconsciously creating an unfriendly feeling between the two countries—a feeling which, I am happy to say, is fast disappearing, and which only requires that we should have a full and fair acquaintance with each other in order to be removed for ever.

At present, indeed, their mutual positions, civil, commercial, and political, are very different from what they were half a century ago, or even at a more recent period. The progress of science, and the astonishing improvements in steam and machinery, have so completely removed the obstructions which impeded their intercourse that the two nations can now scarcely be considered as divided. As a natural consequence, their knowledge of each other has improved, and, as will always happen with generous people, they begin to see that the one was neither knave nor fool, nor the other a churl or a boor. Thus has mutual respect arisen from mutual intercourse, and those who hitherto approached each other with distrust are beginning to perceive that in spite of political or religious prejudices, no matter how stimulated, the truthful experience of life will in the event create nothing but goodwill and confidence between the countries.

Other causes, however, led to this—causes which in every state of society exercise a quick and powerful influence over the minds of men: I allude to literature.

When the Irishman was made to stand forth as the butt of ridicule to his neighbours, the first that undertook his vindication was Maria Edgeworth. During her day the works of no writer made a more forcible impression upon the circles of fashionable life in England, if we except the touching and inimitable "Melodies" of my countryman Thomas Moore. After a lapse of some years, these two were followed by many others who stood forth as lofty and powerful exponents of the national heart and intellect. Who can forget the melancholy but indignant reclamations of John Banim, the dark and touching power of Gerald Griffin, or the unrivalled wit and irresistible drollery of Samuel Lover? Nor

can I omit remarking, that, amidst the array of great talents to which I allude, the genius of our female writers bore off, by the free award of public opinion, some of the brightest wreaths of Irish literature. It would be difficult indeed, in any country, to name three women who have done more in setting right the character of Ireland and her people, whilst exhibiting at the same time the manifestations of high genius, than Miss Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, and Mrs. Hall. About the female creations of the last-named lady especially, there is a touching charm, blending the graceful and the pensive, which reminds us of a very general but peculiar style of Irish beauty, where the lineaments of the face combine at once both the melancholy and the mirthful in such a manner that their harmony constitutes the unchangeable but ever-varying tenderness of the expression.

That national works like these, at once so healthful and so true, produced by those who knew the country, and exhibiting Irishmen not as the blundering buffoons of the English stage, but as men capable of thinking clearly and feeling deeply—that such works, I say, should enable a generous people, as the English undoubtedly are, to divest themselves of the prejudices which they had so long entertained against us, is both natural and gratifying. Those who achieved this great object, or aided in achieving it, have unquestionably rendered services of a most important nature to both the countries, as well as to literature in general.

Yet, whilst the highly-gifted individuals whom I have named succeeded in making their countrymen respected, there was one circumstance which, notwithstanding every exhibition of their genius and love of country, still remained as a reproach against our character as a nation. For nearly a century we were completely at the mercy of our British neighbours, who probably amused themselves at our expense with the greater licence, and a more assured sense of impunity, inasmuch as they knew that we were utterly destitute of a national literature. Unfortunately, the fact could not be disputed. For the last half century, to come down as far as we can, Ireland, to use a plain metaphor, instead of producing her native intellect for home consumption, was

forced to subsist upon the scanty supplies which could be produced from the sister kingdom. This was a reproach which added great strength to the general prejudice against us.

A nation may produce one man or ten men of eminence, but if they cannot succeed in impressing their mind upon the spirit and intellect of their own country, so as to create *in her* a taste for literature or science, no matter how highly they may be appreciated by strangers, they have not reached the exalted purposes of genius. To make this more plain, I shall extend the metaphor a little farther. During some of the years of Irish famine, such were the unhappy circumstances of the country, that she was exporting provisions of every description in the most prodigal abundance, which the generosity of England was sending back again for our support. So was it with literature. Our men and women of genius uniformly carried their talents to the English market, whilst we laboured at home under all the dark privations of a literary famine.

In truth, until within the last ten or twelve years, an Irish author never thought of publishing in his own country, and the consequence was that our literary men followed the example of our great landlords: they became absentees, and drained the country of its intellectual wealth precisely as the others exhausted it of its rents.

Thus did Ireland stand in the singular anomaly of adding some of her most distinguished names to the literature of Great Britain, whilst she herself remained incapable of presenting anything to the world beyond a school-book or a pamphlet; and even of the latter it is well known that if the subject of it were considered important, and its author a man of any talent or station in society, it was certain to be published in London.

Precisely in this state was the country when the two first volumes of the "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" were given to the public by the house of Messrs. Curry & Co., of Sackville Street. Before they appeared, their author, in consequence of their originating from an Irish press, entertained no expectation that they would be read, or excite any interest whatever, in either England or Scotland. He was

not, however, without a strong confidence that, notwithstanding the wild and uncleared state of his own country at the time, so far as native literature was concerned, his two little pioneers would work their way with at least moderate success. He felt conscious that everything depicted in them was true, and that by those who were acquainted with the manners, and language, and feelings of the people, they would sooner or later be recognised as faithful delineations of Irish life. In this confidence the event justified him; for not only were his volumes stamped with an immediate popularity at home, where they could be best appreciated, but awarded a very gratifying position in the literature of the day by the unanimous and not less generous verdict of the English and Scotch critics.

Thus it was that the publication of two unpretending volumes, written by a peasant's son, established an important and gratifying fact — that our native country, if without a literature at the time, was at least capable of appreciating and willing to foster the humble exertions of such as endeavoured to create one. Nor was this all; for, so far as resident authors were concerned, it was now clearly established that an Irish writer could be successful at home without the necessity of appearing under the name and sanction of the great London or Edinburgh booksellers.

The rapid sale and success of the first series encouraged the author to bring out a second, which he did, but with a different bookseller. The spirit of publishing was now beginning to extend, and the talent of the country to put itself in motion. The popularity of the second effort surpassed that of the first, and the author had the gratification of knowing that the generosity of public feeling and opinion accorded him a still higher position than before, as did the critics of the day, without a dissentient voice. Still, as in the case of his first effort, he saw with honest pride that his own country and his countrymen placed the highest value upon his works, because they best understood them.

About this time the literary taste of the metropolis began to feel the first symptoms of life. As yet, however, they were very faint. Two or three periodicals were attempted, and though of very considerable merit, and conducted by able

men, none of them, I believe, reached a year's growth. The *Dublin Literary Gazette*, the *National Magazine*, the *Dublin Monthly Magazine*, and the *Dublin University Review*, all perished in their infancy—not, however, because they were unworthy of success, but because Ireland was not then what she is now fast becoming, a reading, and consequently a thinking, country. To every one of these the author contributed, and he has the satisfaction of being able to say that there has been no publication projected purely for the advancement of literature in his own country to which he has not given the aid of his pen, such as it was, and this whether he received remuneration or not. Indeed, the consciousness that the success of his works had been the humble means of inciting others to similar exertion in their own country, and of thus giving the first impulse to our literature, is one which has on his part created an enthusiastic interest in it which will only die with him.

Notwithstanding the failure of the periodicals just mentioned, it was clear that the intellect of the country was beginning to feel its strength, and put forth its power. A national spirit that rose above the narrow distinctions of creed and party began to form itself, and in the first impulses of its early enthusiasm a periodical was established, which it is only necessary to name—the *Dublin University Magazine*—a work unsurpassed by any magazine of the day; and which, moreover, without ever departing from its principles, has been as a bond of union for literary men of every class, who have from time to time enriched its pages by their contributions. It has been and is a neutral spot in a country where party feeling runs so high, on which the Roman Catholic Priest and the Protestant Parson, the Whig, the Tory, and the Radical, divested of their respective prejudices, can meet in an amicable spirit. I mention these things with great satisfaction, for it is surely a gratification to know that literature, in a country which has been so much distracted as Ireland, is progressing in a spirit of noble candour and generosity, which is ere long likely to produce a most salutary effect among the educated classes of all parties, and consequently among those whom they influence. The number, ability, and importance of the works which have issued from the Dublin press within

the last eight or ten years, if they could be enumerated here, would exhibit the rapid progress of the national mind, and satisfy the reader that Ireland in a few years will be able to sustain a native literature as lofty and generous and beneficial to herself as any other country in the world can boast of.

This hasty sketch of its progress I felt myself called upon to give, in order that our neighbours may know what we have done, and learn to respect us accordingly; and, if the truth must be told, from a principle of honest pride, arising from the position which our country holds and is likely to hold as an intellectual nation.

Having disposed of this topic, I come now to one of not less importance as being connected with the other—the condition and character of the peasantry of Ireland.

It may be necessary, however, before entering upon this topic, to give my readers some satisfactory assurance that the subject is one which I ought well to understand, not only from my humble position in early life, and my uninterrupted intercourse with the people as one of themselves until I had reached the age of twenty-two years, but from the fact of having bestowed upon it my undivided and most earnest attention ever since I left the dark mountains and green vales of my native Tyrone, and began to examine human life and manners as a citizen of the world. As it is admitted also, that there exists no people whose character is so anomalous as that of the Irish, and consequently so difficult to be understood, especially by strangers, it becomes a still more appropriate duty on my part to give to the public, proofs sufficiently valid, that I come to a subject of such difficulty with unusual advantages on my side, and that consequently my exhibitions of Irish peasant life, in its most comprehensive sense, may be relied on as truthful and authentic. For this purpose it will be necessary that I should give a brief sketch of my own youth, early station in society, and general education, as the son of an honest humble peasant.

My father, indeed, was a very humble man, but, in consequence of his unaffected piety and stainless integrity of principle, he was held in high esteem by all who knew him, no matter what their rank in life might be. When the state of education in Ireland during his youth and that of my

mother is considered, it will not be a matter of surprise that what they did receive was very limited. It would be difficult, however, if not impossible, to find two persons in their lowly station so highly and singularly gifted. My father possessed a memory not merely great or surprising, but absolutely astonishing. He could repeat nearly the whole of the Old and New Testament by heart, and was, besides, a living index to almost every chapter and verse you might wish to find in it. In all other respects, too, his memory was equally amazing. My native place is a spot rife with old legends, tales, traditions, customs, and superstitions; so that in my early youth, even beyond the walls of my own humble roof, they met me in every direction. It was at home, however, and from my father's lips in particular, that they were perpetually sounding in my ears. In fact, his memory was a perfect storehouse, and a rich one, of all that the social antiquary, the man of letters, the poet, or the musician would consider valuable. As a teller of old tales, legends, and historical anecdotes he was unrivalled, and his stock of them was inexhaustible. He spoke the Irish and English languages with nearly equal fluency. With all kinds of charms, old rauns, or poems, old prophecies, religious superstitions, tales of pilgrims, miracles, and pilgrimages, anecdotes of blessed priests and friars, revelations from ghosts and fairies, was he thoroughly acquainted. And so strongly were all these impressed upon my mind, by frequent repetition on his part, and the indescribable delight they gave me on mine, that I have hardly ever since heard, during a tolerably-enlarged intercourse with Irish society, both educated and uneducated—with the antiquary, the scholar, or the humble *senachie*—any single tradition, usage, or legend that, as far as I can at present recollect, was perfectly new to me, or unheard before in some similar or cognate dress. This is certainly saying much; but I believe I may assert with confidence, that I could produce, in attestation of its truth, the names of Petrie, Sir W. Betham, Ferguson, and O'Donovan, the most distinguished antiquaries, both of social usages and otherwise, that ever Ireland produced. What rendered this besides of such peculiar advantage to me in after life, as a literary man, was, that I heard them as often in the Irish language as in the English, if not

oftener—a circumstance which enabled me in my writings to transfer the genius, the idiomatic peculiarity and conversational spirit of the one language into the other, precisely as the people themselves do in their dialogue whenever the heart or imagination happens to be moved by the darker or better passions.

Having thus stated faithfully, without adding or diminishing, a portion, and a portion only, of what I owe to one parent, I cannot overlook the debt of gratitude which is due to the memory of the other.

My mother, whose name was Kelly—Mary Kelly—possessed the sweetest and most exquisite of human voices. In her early life, I have often been told by those who had heard her sing, that any previous intimation of her presence at a wake, dance, or other festive occasion, was sure to attract crowds of persons, many from a distance of several miles, in order to hear from her lips the touching old airs of their country. No sooner was it known that she would attend any such meeting, than the fact spread through the neighbourhood like wild-fire, and the people flocked from all parts to hear her, just as the fashionable world do now when the name of some eminent songstress is announced in the papers; with this difference, that upon such occasions the voice of the one falls only upon the ear, whilst that of the other sinks deeply into the heart. She was not so well acquainted with the English tongue as my father, although she spoke it with sufficient ease for all the purposes of life; and for this reason, among others, she generally gave the old Irish versions of the songs in question, rather than the English ones. This, however, as I said, was not her sole motive. In the first place, she had several old songs which at that time—I believe, too, I may add at this—had never been translated; and I very much fear that some valuable ones, both as to words and airs, have perished with her. Her family were all imbued with a poetical spirit, and some of her immediate ancestors composed in the Irish tongue several fine old songs, in the same manner as Carolan did; that is, some in praise of a patron or a friend, and others to celebrate rustic beauties, that have long since been sleeping in the dust. For this reason she had many old compositions that were almost peculiar to our family, which I am afraid

could not now be procured at all, and are consequently lost. I think her uncle, and I believe her grandfather, were the authors of several Irish poems and songs, because I know that some of them she *sang*, and others she only *recited*.

Independently of this, she had a prejudice against singing the Irish airs to English words; an old custom of the country was thereby invaded, and an association disturbed which habit had rendered dear to her. I remember on one occasion, when she was asked to sing the English version of that touching melody "The Red-Haired Man's Wife," she replied, "I will sing it for you; but the English words and the air are like a quarrelling man and wife: *the Irish melts into the tune, but the English doesn't*"—an expression scarcely less remarkable for its beauty than its truth. She spake the words in Irish.

This gift of singing with such sweetness and power the old sacred songs and airs of Ireland was not the only one for which she was remarkable. Perhaps there never lived a human being capable of giving the Irish cry, or *keen*, with such exquisite effect, or of pouring into its wild notes a spirit of such irresistible pathos and sorrow. I have often been present when she has "raised the keen" over the corpse of some relative or neighbour, and my readers may judge of the melancholy charm which accompanied this expression of her sympathy, when I assure them that the general clamour of violent grief was gradually diminished from admiration until it became ultimately hushed, and no voice was heard but her own—wailing in sorrowful but solitary beauty. This pause, it is true, was never long, for however great the admiration might be which she excited, the hearts of those who heard her soon melted, and even strangers were often forced to confess her influence by the tears which she caused them to shed for those whose deaths could, otherwise, in no other way have affected them. I am the youngest, I believe, of fourteen children, and of course could never have heard her until age and the struggles of life had robbed her voice of its sweetness. I heard enough, however, from her blessed lips to set my heart to an almost painful perception of that spirit which steeps these fine old songs in a tenderness which no other music possesses. Many a time, of a winter night, when seated at her spinning-wheel, singing the "Trougha" or "Shuil

agra," or some other old "song of sorrow," have I then, little more than a child, gone over to her, and, with a broken voice and eyes charged with tears, whispered, "Mother dear, don't sing that song, it makes me sorrowful;" she then usually stopped, and sung some one which I liked better because it affected me less. At this day I am in possession of Irish airs which none of our best antiquaries in Irish music have heard, except through me, and of which neither they nor I myself know the names.

Such, gentle reader, were my humble parents, under whose untaught but natural genius, setting all other advantages aside, it is not to be wondered at that my heart should have been so completely moulded into that spirit and those feelings which characterise my country and her children.

These, however, were my domestic advantages; but I now come to others, which arose from my position in life as the son of a man who was one of the people. My father, at the farthest point to which my memory goes back, lived in a townland called Prillisk, in the parish of Clogher, and county of Tyrone; and I only remember living there in a cottage. From that the family removed to a place called Tonagh, or, more familiarly, Towney, about an English mile from Prillisk. It was here I first went to school to a Connaught-man named Pat Frayne, who, however, remained there only for a very short period in the neighbourhood. Such was the neglected state of education at that time, that for a year or two afterwards there was no school sufficiently near to which I could be sent. At length it was ascertained that a master, another Connaught-man by the way, named O'Beirne, had opened a school—a hedge-school of course—at Findramore. To this I was sent, along with my brother John, the youngest of the family next to myself. I continued with him for about a year and a half, when who should return to our neighbourhood but Pat Frayne, the redoubtable prototype of Mat Kavanagh in "The Hedge School." O'Beirne, it is true, was an excellent specimen of the hedge-schoolmaster, but nothing at all to be compared to Frayne. About the period I write of, there was no other description of school to which any one could be sent, and the consequence was, that rich and poor (I speak of the peasantry), Protestant and Catholic,

Presbyterian and Methodist, boys and girls, were all congregated under the same roof, to the amount of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty or two hundred. In this school I remained for about a year or two, when our family removed to a place called Nurchasy, the property of the Rev. Dr. Story, of Corick. Of us, however, he neither could nor did know anything, for we were under-tenants, our immediate landlord being no less a person than Hugh Traynor, then so famous for the distillation, *sub rosa*, of exquisite *mountain dew*, and to whom the reader will find allusions made in that capacity more than once in the following volume. Nurchasy was within about half a mile of Findramore, to which school, under O'Beirne, I was again sent. Here I continued, until a classical teacher came to a place called Tulnavert, now the property of John Birney, Esq., of Lisburn, to whom I had the pleasure of dedicating the two first volumes of my "Traits and Stories." This tyrannical blockhead, whose name I do not choose to mention, instead of being allowed to teach classics, ought to have been put into a strait-waistcoat or the stocks, and either whipped once in every twenty-four hours, or kept in a madhouse until the day of his death. He had been a student in Maynooth, where he became deranged, and was, of course, sent home to his friends, with whom he recovered sufficiently to become cruel and hypocritical, to an extent which I have never yet seen equalled. Whenever the son of a rich man committed an offence, he would grind his teeth and growl like a tiger, but in no single instance had he the moral courage or sense of justice to correct him. On the contrary, he uniformly "nursed his wrath to keep it warm," until the son of a poor man transgressed, and on his unfortunate body he was sure to wreak signal vengeance for the stupidity or misconduct of the wealthy blockhead. This was his system, and my readers may form some opinion of the low ebb at which knowledge and moral feeling were at the time, when I assure them that not one of the humbler boys durst make a complaint against the scoundrel at home, unless under the certainty of being well flogged for their pains. A hedge-schoolmaster was then held in such respect and veneration that, no matter how cruel or profligate he might be, his person and character, unless in some extraordinary case of cruelty,

resulting in death or mutilation, were looked upon as free from all moral or legal responsibility. This certainly was not the fault of the people, but of those laws which, by making education a crime, generated ignorance, and then punished it for violating them.

For the present it is enough to say that a most interesting child, a niece of my own, lost her life by the severity of Pat Frayne, the Connaught-man. In a fit of passion he caught the poor girl by the ear, which he nearly plucked out of her head. The violence of the act broke some of the internal muscles or tendons; suppuration and subsequently inflammation, first of the adjoining parts and afterwards of the brain, took place, and the fine intelligent little creature was laid in a premature grave, because the ignorance of the people justified a pedantic hedge-schoolmaster in the exercise of irresponsible cruelty. Frayne was never prosecuted, neither was the classical despot, who, by the way, sits for the picture of the fellow in whose school, and at whose hands, the Poor Scholar receives the tyrannical and heartless treatment mentioned in that tale. Many a time the cruelty exercised towards that unhappy boy, whose name was Quin, has wrung my heart and brought the involuntary tears to my eyes—tears which I was forced to conceal, being very well assured from experience, that any sympathy of mine, if noticed, would be certain to procure me or any other friend of his an ample participation in his punishment. He was, in truth, the scape-goat of the school, and it makes my blood boil, even whilst I write, to think how the poor friendless lad, far removed from either father or mother, was kicked, and cuffed, and beaten on the naked head, with a kind of stick between a horse-rod and a cudgel, until his poor face got pale, and he was forced to totter over to a seat in order to prevent himself from fainting or falling in consequence of severe pain.

At length, however, the inhuman villain began to find, when it was too late, that his ferocity, in spite of the terror which it occasioned, was soon likely to empty his school. He now became as fawning and slavish as he had before been insolent and savage; but the wealthy farmers of the neighbourhood, having now full cognisance of his conduct, made common cause with the poorer men whose children were as

shamefully treated, and the result was, that in about six weeks they forced him to leave that part of the country for want of scholars, having been literally groaned out of it by the curses and indignation of all who knew him.

Here, then, was I once more at a loss for a school, and, I must add, in no disposition at all to renew my acquaintance with literature. Our family had again removed from Nurchasy, to a place up nearer the mountains, called Springtown, on the northern side of the parish. I was now about fourteen, and began to feel a keen relish for all the sports and amusements of the country, into which I entered with a spirit of youth and enthusiasm rarely equalled. For about two years I attended no school; but it was during this period that I received, notwithstanding, the best part of my education. Our farm in Springtown was about sixteen or eighteen acres, and I occasionally assisted the family in working at it, but never regularly, for I was not called upon to do so, nor would I have been permitted even had I wished it. It was about six months after our removal to Springtown that an incident in my early life occurred which gave rise to one of the most popular tales perhaps, with the exception of "The Miser," that I have written—that is "The Poor Scholar." There being now no classical school within eighteen or twenty miles of Springtown, it was suggested to our family, by a nephew of the parish priest, then a young man of six or eight and twenty, that, under the circumstances, it would be a prudent step on their part to prepare an outfit, and send me up to Munster as a poor scholar, to complete my education. Pat Frayne, who, by the way, had been a poor scholar himself, had advised the same thing before, and, as the name does not involve disgrace, I felt no reluctance in going, especially as the priest's nephew, who proposed it, had made up his mind on accompanying me for a similar purpose. Indeed, the poor scholars who go to Munster are indebted for nothing but their bed and board, which they receive kindly and hospitably from the parents of the scholars. The masters are generally paid their full terms by these pitiable beings; but this rule, like all others, of course, has its exceptions. At all events, my outfit was got ready, and on a beautiful morning in the month of May I separated from my family to

go in quest of education. There was no collection, however, in my case, as mentioned in the tale, as my own family supplied the funds supposed to be necessary. I have been present, however, at more than one collection made for similar purposes, and heard a good-natured sermon not very much differing from that given in the story.

The priest's nephew, on the day we were to start, suddenly changed his mind, and I consequently had to undertake the journey alone, which I did with a heavy heart. The farther I got from home, the more my spirits sank, or, in the beautiful image of Goldsmith,

> "I dragged at each remove a lengthening chain."

I travelled as far as the town of Granard, and during the journey, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the almost parental tenderness and hospitality which I received on my way could not be adequately described. The reader will find an attempt at it in the story. The parting from home and my adventures on the road are real.

Having reached Granard, my courage began to fail, and my family at home, now that I had departed from them, began also to feel something like remorse for having permitted one so young and inexperienced as I then was to go abroad alone upon the world. My mother's sorrow especially was deep, and her cry was, "Oh, why did I let my boy go? maybe I will never see him again!"

At this time, as the reader may be aware from my parental education, there was not a being alive more thoroughly imbued with superstition; and, whether for good or ill, at all events that superstition returned me to my family. On reaching Granard I felt, of course, fatigued, and soon went to bed, where I slept soundly. It was not, however, a dreamless sleep: I thought I was going along a strange path to some particular place, and that a mad bull met me on the road, and pursued me with such speed and fury that I awoke in a state of singular terror. That was sufficient; my mind had been already wavering, and the dream determined me. The next morning after breakfast I bent my steps homewards, and, as it happened, my return took a weighty load of bitter

grief from the heart of my mother and family. The house I stopped at in Granard was a kind of small inn, kept by a man whose name was Peter Grehan. Such were the incidents which gave rise to the tale of "The Poor Scholar."

I was now growing up fast, and began to feel a boyish ambition of associating with those who were older and bigger than myself. Although miserably deficient in education—for I had been well beaten, but never taught—yet I was looked upon as a prodigy of knowledge; and I can assure the reader that I took very good care not to dispel that agreeable delusion. Indeed, at this time, I was as great a young literary coxcomb as ever lived, my vanity being high and inflated exactly in proportion to my ignorance, which was also of the purest water. This vanity, however, resulted as much from my position and circumstances as from any strong disposition to be vain on my part. It was generated by the ignorance of the people, and their extreme veneration for anything in the shape of superior knowledge. In fact they insisted that I knew every earthly subject, because I had been a couple of years at Latin, and was designed for a priest. It was useless to undeceive men who would not be convinced, so I accordingly gave them, as they say, "the length of their tether;" nay, to such purpose did I ply them with proofs of it that my conversation soon became as fine a specimen of pedantic bombast as ever was uttered. Not a word under six feet could come out of my lips, even of English; but as the best English, after all, is but commonplace, I peppered them with vile Latin, and an occasional verse in Greek, from St. John's Gospel, which I translated for them into a wrong meaning, with an heir of lofty superiority that made them turn up their eyes with wonder. I was then, however, but one of a class which still exists, and will continue to do so until a better informed generation shall prevent those who compose it from swaggering about in all the pompous pride of young impostors, who boast of knowing "the seven languages." The reader will find an illustration of this in the sketch of "Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth."

In the meantime, I was unconsciously but rapidly preparing myself for a position in Irish literature which I little

dreamt I should ever occupy. I now mingled in the sports and pastimes of the people, until indulgence in them became the predominant passion of my youth. Throwing the stone, wrestling, leaping, football, and every other description of athletic exercise filled up the measure of my early happiness. I attended every wake, dance, fair, and merry-making in the neighbourhood, and became so celebrated for dancing horn-pipes, jigs, and reels, that I was soon without a rival in the parish.

This kind of life, though very delightful to a boy of my years, was not, however, quite satisfactory, as it afforded me no ultimate prospect, and the death of my father had occasioned the circumstances of the family to decline. I heard, about this time, that a distant relative of mine, a highly respectable priest, had opened a classical school near Glasslough, in the county of Monaghan. To him I accordingly went, mentioned our affinity, and had my claims allowed. I attended his school with intermission for about two years, at the expiration of which period I once more returned to our family, who were then very much reduced.

I was now about nineteen, strong, active, and could leap two-and-twenty feet on a dead level; but, though thoroughly acquainted with Irish life among my own class, I was as ignorant of the world as a child. Ever since my boyhood, in consequence of the legends which I had heard from my father, about the far-famed Lough Derg, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, I felt my imagination fired with a romantic curiosity to perform a station at that celebrated place. I accordingly did so, and the description of that most penal performance, some years afterwards, not only constituted my *début* in literature, but was also the means of preventing me from being a pleasant, strong-bodied parish priest at this day; indeed, it was the cause of changing the whole destiny of my subsequent life.

"The Lough Derg Pilgrim" is given in the present edition, and may be relied on, not so much as an ordinary narrative, as a perfect transcript of what takes place during the stations which are held there in the summer months.

Having returned from this, I knew not exactly how to dispose of myself. On one thing I was determined—never

to enter the Church; but this resolution I kept faithfully to myself. I had nothing for it now but to forget my sacerdotal prospects, which, as I have said, had already been renounced, or to sink down, as many others like me had done, into a mere tiller of the earth,—a character in Ireland far more unpopular than that which the Scotch call "a sticket minister!"

It was about this period that chance first threw the inimitable "Adventures" of the renowned Gil Blas across my path. During my whole life I had been an insatiable reader of such sixpenny romances and history-books as the hedge-schools afforded. Many a time have I given up my meals rather than lose one minute from the interest excited by the story I was perusing. Having read Gil Blas, however, I felt an irrepressible passion for adventure which nothing could divert; in fact, I was as much the creature of the impulse it excited, as the ship is of the helmsman, or the steam-engine of the principle that guides it.

Stimulated by this romantic love of adventure, I left my native place, and directed my steps to the parish of Killanny, in the county of Louth, the Catholic clergyman of which was a nephew of our own parish priest, brother to him who proposed going to Munster with me, and an old schoolfellow of my own, though probably twenty years my senior. This man's residence was within a quarter or half a mile's distance of the celebrated Wild-goose Lodge, in which, some six months before, a whole family, consisting of, I believe, eight persons, men, women, and children, had been, from motives of personal vengeance, consumed to ashes. I stopped with him for a fortnight, and succeeded in procuring a tuition in the house of a wealthy farmer named Piers Murphy, near Corcreagh. This, however, was a tame life, and a hard one, so I resolved once more to give up a miserable salary and my board, for the fortunate chances which an ardent temperament and a strong imagination perpetually suggested to me as likely to be evolved out of the vicissitudes of life. Urged on, therefore, by a spirit of romance, I resolved to precipitate myself on the Irish Metropolis, which I accordingly entered with two shillings and ninepence in my pocket; an utter stranger, of course friendless, ignorant of the world, without

aim or object, but not without a certain strong feeling of vague and shapeless ambition, for, the truth was, I had not yet begun to think, and consequently looked upon life less as a reality than a vision.

Thus have I, as a faithful, but I fear a dull, guide conducted my reader from the lowly cottage in Prillisk, where I first drew my breath, along those tangled walks and green lanes which are familiar to the foot of the peasant alone, until I enter upon the highways of the world, and strike into one of its greatest and most crowded thoroughfares—the Metropolis. Whether this brief sketch of my early and humble life, my education, my sports, my hopes and struggles, be calculated to excite any particular interest, I know not; I can only assure my reader that the details, so far as they go, are scrupulously correct and authentic, and that they never would have been obtruded upon him, were it not from an anxiety to satisfy him that, in undertaking to describe the Irish peasantry as they are, I approached the difficult task with advantages of knowing them, which perhaps few other Irish writers ever possessed; *and this is the only merit which I claim.*

A few words now upon the moral and physical condition of the people may not be unsuitable before I close, especially for the sake of those who may wish to acquire a knowledge of their general character, previous to their perusal of the following volume. This task, it is true, is not one of such difficulty now as it was some years ago. Much light has been thrown on the Irish character, not only by the great names I have already enumerated, but by some equally high which I have omitted. On this subject it would be impossible to overlook the names of Lever, Maxwell, or Otway, or to forget the mellow hearth-light and chimney-corner tone, the happy dialogue and legendary truth, which characterise the exquisite fairy legends of Crofton Croker. Much of the difficulty of the task, I say, has been removed by these writers; but there remains enough still behind to justify me in giving a short dissertation upon the habits and feelings of my countrymen.

Of those whose physical state has been and is so deplorably wretched, it may not be supposed that the tone of morals can be either high or pure; and yet, if we consider

the circumstances in which he has been for such a lengthened period placed, it is undeniable that the Irishman is a remarkably moral man. Let us suppose, for instance, that in England and Scotland the great body of the people had for a couple or three centuries never received an adequate or proper education : in that case, let us ask, what the moral aspect of society in either country would be to-day? But this is not merely the thing to be considered. The Irishman was not only *not* educated, but actually punished for attempting to acquire knowledge, in the first place; and, in the second, punished also for the ignorance created by its absence. In other words, the penal laws rendered education criminal, and then caused the unhappy people to suffer for the crimes which proper knowledge would have prevented them from committing. It was just like depriving a man of his sight, and afterwards causing him to be punished for stumbling. It is beyond all question that from the time of the wars of Elizabeth and the introduction of the Reformation, until very recently, there was no fixed system of wholesome education in the country. The people, possessed of strong political and religious prejudices, were left in a state of physical destitution and moral ignorance, such as were calculated to produce ten times the amount of crime which was committed. Is it any wonder, then, that in such a condition social errors and dangerous theories should be generated, and that neglect, and poverty, and ignorance combined should give to the country a character for turbulence and outrage? The same causes will produce the same effects in any country, and were it not that the standard of personal and domestic comfort was so low in Ireland, there is no doubt that the historian would have a much darker catalogue of crime to record than he has. The Irishman, in fact, was mute and patient under circumstances which would have driven the better fed and more comfortable Englishman into open outrage and contempt of all authority. God forbid that I for a moment should become the apologist of crime, much less the crimes of my countrymen! but it is beyond all question that the principles upon which the country was governed have been such as to leave down to the present day many of their evil consequences behind them. The penal code, to be sure,

is now abolished, but so are not many of its political effects among the people. Its consequences have not yet departed from the country; nor has the hereditary hatred of the laws, which unconsciously descended from father to son, ceased to regulate their conduct and opinions. Thousands of them are ignorant that ever such a thing as a penal code existed; yet the feeling against law survives, although the source from which it has been transmitted may be forgotten. This will easily account for much of the political violence and crime which moments of great excitement produce among us; nor need we feel surprised that this state of things should be continued, to the manifest injury of the people themselves, by the baneful effects of agitation.

The period, therefore, for putting the character of our country fairly upon its trial has not yet arrived; although we are willing to take the Irishman as we find him; nor would we shrink even at the present moment from comparing him with any of his neighbours. His political sins and their consequences were left him as an heirloom, and result from a state of things which he himself did not occasion. Setting these aside, where is the man to be found in any country who has carried with him through all his privations and penalties so many of the best virtues of our nature? In other countries the man who commits a great crime is always a great criminal, and the whole heart is hardened and debased; but it is not so in Ireland. The agrarian and political outrage is often perpetrated by men who possess the best virtues of humanity, and whose hearts as individuals actually abhor the crime. The moral standard here is no doubt dreadfully erroneous, and until a correct and Christian one, emanating from a better system of education, shall be substituted for it, it will, with a people who so think and feel, be impossible utterly to prevent the occurrence of these great evils. We must wait for thirty or forty years, that is, until the rising or perhaps the subsequent generation shall be educated *out of* these wild and destructive prejudices, before we can fully estimate the degree of excellence to which our national character may arrive. In my own youth, and I am now only forty-eight years, I do not remember a single school under the immediate superintendence of either priest

or parson, and that in a parish the extent of which is, I dare say, ten miles by eight. The instruction of the children was altogether a matter in which no clergy of any creed took an interest. This was left altogether to hedge-schoolmasters, a class of men who, with few exceptions, bestowed such an education upon the people as is sufficient almost, in the absence of all other causes, to account for much of the agrarian violence and erroneous principles which regulate their movements and feelings on that and similar subjects. For further information on this matter, the reader is referred to the "Hedge School."

With respect to these darker shades of the Irish character, I feel that, consistently with that love of truth and impartiality which has guided, and I trust ever shall guide, my pen, I could not pass them over without further notice. I know that it is a very questionable defence to say that some, if not principally all, of their crimes originate in agrarian or political vengeance. Indeed, I believe that, so far from this circumstance being looked upon as a defence, it ought to be considered as an aggravation of the guilt; inasmuch as it is, beyond all doubt, at least a far more manly thing to inflict an injury upon an enemy face to face, and under the influence of immediate resentment, than to crouch like a cowardly assassin behind a hedge and coolly murder him without one moment's preparation, or any means whatsoever of defence. This is a description of crime which no man with one generous drop of blood in his veins can think of without shame and indignation. Unhappily, however, for the security of human life, every crime of the kind results more from the dark tyranny of these secret confederacies by which the lower classes are organised, than from any natural appetite for shedding blood. Individually, the Irish loathe murder as much as any people in the world; but in the circumstances before us it often happens that the Irishman is not a free agent—very far from it: on the contrary, he is frequently made the instrument of a system to which he must become either an obedient slave or a victim.

Even here, however, although nothing can or ought to be said to palliate the cowardly and unmanly crime of assassination, yet something can certainly be advanced to account for

the state of feeling by which from time to time, and by frequent occurrence, it came to be so habitual among the people that by familiarity it became stripped of its criminality and horror.

Now it is idle, and it would be dishonest, to deny the fact, that the lower Irish, until a comparatively recent period, were treated with apathy and gross neglect by the only class to whom they could or ought to look up for sympathy or protection. The conferring of the elective franchise upon the forty-shilling freeholders, or, in other words, upon paupers, added to the absence of proper education, or the means of acquiring it, generated, by the fraudulent subdivision of small holdings, by bribery, perjury, and corruption, a state of moral feeling among the poorer classes which could not but be productive of much crime. And yet, notwithstanding this shameful prostitution of their morals and comfort for the purposes of political ambition or personal aggrandisement, they were in general a peaceable and enduring people; and it was only when some act of unjustifiable severity, or oppression in the person of a middleman, agent, or hard-hearted landlord, drove them houseless upon the world, that they fell back upon the darker crimes of which I am speaking. But what, I ask, could be expected from such a state of things? And who generated it? It is not, indeed, to be wondered at that a set of men, who so completely neglected their duties as the old landlords of Ireland did, should have the very weapons turned against themselves which their own moral profligacy first put into the hands of those whom they corrupted. Up to this day the peasantry are charged with indifference to the obligation of an oath, and, in those who still have anything to do in elections, I fear with too much truth. But then let us inquire who first trained and familiarised them to it? Why, the old landlords of Ireland; and now their descendants, and such of themselves as survive, may behold, in the crimes which disgrace the country, the disastrous effects of a bad system created by their forefathers or themselves.

In the meantime, I have no doubt that by the removal of the causes which produced this deplorable state of things their disastrous effects will also soon disappear. That the

present landlords of Ireland are, with the ordinary number of exceptions, a very different class of men from those who have gone before them, is a fact which will ultimately tell for the peace and prosperity of the country. Let the ignorance of the people, or rather the positive bad knowledge with which, as to a sense of civil duties, their minds are filled, be removed, and replaced with principles of a higher and more Christian tendency. Let the Irish landlords consider the interests of their tenantry as their own, and there is little doubt that with the aids of science, agricultural improvement, and the advantages of superior machinery, the Irish will become a prosperous, contented, and great people.

It is not just to the general character of our people, however, to speak of these crimes as national, for, in fact, they are not so. If Tipperary and some of the adjoining parts of Munster were blotted out of the moral map of the country, we would stand as a nation in a far higher position than that which we occupy in the opinion of our neighbours. This is a distinction which in justice to us ought to be made, for it is surely unfair to charge the whole kingdom with the crimes which disgrace only a single county of it, together with a few adjacent districts—allowing, of course, for some melancholy exceptions in other parts.

Having now discussed, with I think sufficient candour and impartiality, that portion of our national character which appears worst and weakest in the eyes of our neighbours, and attempted to show that pre-existing circumstances originating from an unwise policy had much to do in calling into existence and shaping its evil impulses, I come now to a more agreeable task—the consideration of our social and domestic virtues. And here it is where the Irishman immeasurably outstrips all competitors. His hospitality is not only a habit but a principle; and indeed of such a quick and generous temperament is he, that in ninety cases out of a hundred the feeling precedes the reflection, which in others prompts the virtue. To be a stranger and friendless, or suffering hunger and thirst, is at any time a sufficient passport to his heart and purse; but it is not merely the thing or virtue, but also his manner of doing it, that constitutes the charm which runs

through his conduct. There is a natural politeness and sincerity in his manner which no man can mistake; and it is a fact, the truth of which I have felt a thousand times, that he will make you feel the acceptance of the favour or kindness he bestows to be a compliment to himself rather than to you. The delicate ingenuity with which he diminishes the nature or amount of his own kindness, proves that he is no common man either in heart or intellect; and when all fails he will lie like Lucifer himself, and absolutely seduce you into an acceptance of his hospitality or assistance. I speak now exclusively of the peasantry. Certainly in domestic life there is no man so exquisitely affectionate and humanised as the Irishman. The national imagination is active and the national heart warm, and it follows very naturally that he should be, and is, tender and strong in all his domestic relations. Unlike the people of other nations, his grief is loud but lasting, vehement but deep; and whilst its shadow has been chequered by the laughter and mirth of a cheerful disposition, still in the moments of seclusion, at his bedside prayer, or over the grave of those he loved, it will put itself forth after half a life with a vivid power of recollection which is sometimes almost beyond belief.

The Irish, however, are naturally a refined people; but by this I mean the refinement which appreciates and cherishes whatever there is in nature, as manifested through the influence of the softer arts of music and poetry. The effect of music upon the Irish heart I ought to know well, and no man need tell me that a barbarous or cruel people ever possessed national music that was beautiful and pathetic. The music of any nation is the manifestation of its general feeling, and not that which creates it; although there is no doubt but the one when formed perpetuates and reproduces the other. It is no wonder, then, that the domestic feelings of the Irish should be so singularly affectionate and strong, when we consider that they have been, in spite of every obstruction, kept under the softening influence of music and poetry. This music and poetry, too, essentially their own—and whether streaming of a summer evening along their pastoral fields, echoing through their still glens, or poured forth at the winter hearth, still, by its soft and melancholy

spirit, stirring up a thousand tender associations that must necessarily touch and improve the heart. And it is for this reason that that heart becomes so remarkably eloquent, if not poetical, when moved by sorrow. Many a time I have seen a keener commence her wail over the corpse of a near relative, and by degrees she has risen from the simple wail or cry to a high but mournful recitative, extemporised, under the excitement of the moment, into sentiments that were highly figurative and impressive. In this she was aided very much by the genius of the language, which possesses the finest and most copious vocabulary in the world for the expression of either sorrow or love.

It has been said that the Irish, notwithstanding a deep susceptibility of sorrow, are a light-hearted people; and this is strictly true. What, however, is the one fact but a natural consequence of the other? No man, for instance, ever possessed a high order of humour whose temperament was not naturally melancholy, and no country in the world more clearly establishes that point than Ireland. Here the melancholy and mirth are not simply in a proximate state, but frequently flash together, and again separate so quickly, that the alternation or blending, as the case may be, whilst it is felt by the spectators, yet stands beyond all known rules of philosophy to solve it. Any one at all acquainted with Ireland knows that in no country is mirth lighter, or sorrow deeper, or the smile and the tear seen more frequently on the face at the same moment. Their mirth, however, is not levity, nor their sorrow gloom; and for this reason none of those dreary and desponding reactions take place which, as in France especially, so frequently terminate in suicide.

The recreations of the Irish were very varied and some of them of a highly intellectual cast. These latter, however, have altogether disappeared from the country, or at all events are fast disappearing. The old Harper is now hardly seen; the *Senachie,* where he exists, is but a dim and faded representative of that very old Chronicler in his palmy days; and the Prophecy-man unfortunately has survived the failure of his best and most cherished predictions. The poor old Prophet's stock-in-trade is nearly exhausted, and little now

remains but the slaughter which is to take place at the mill of Louth when the mill is to be turned three times with human blood, and the miller to have six fingers and two thumbs on each hand, as a collateral prognostication of that bloody event.

The amusement derived from these persons was undoubtedly of a very imaginative character, and gives sufficient proof that, had the national intellect been duly cultivated, it is difficult to say in what position as a literary country Ireland might have stood at this day. At present the national recreations, though still sufficiently varied and numerous, are neither so strongly marked nor diversified as formerly. Fun, or the love of it, to be sure, is an essential principle in the Irish character; and nothing that can happen, no matter how solemn or how sorrowful it may be, is allowed to proceed without it. In Ireland the house of death is sure to be the merriest one in the neighbourhood; but here the mirth is kindly and considerately introduced, from motives of sympathy—in other words, for the alleviation of the mourners' sorrow. The same thing may be said of its association with religion. Whoever has witnessed a station in Ireland made at some blessed lake or holy well will understand this. At such places it is quite usual to see young men and women devoutly circumambulating the well or lake on their bare knees with all the marks of penitence and contrition strongly impressed upon their faces; whilst again, after an hour or two, the same individuals may be found in a tent dancing with ecstatic vehemence to the music of the bagpipe or fiddle.

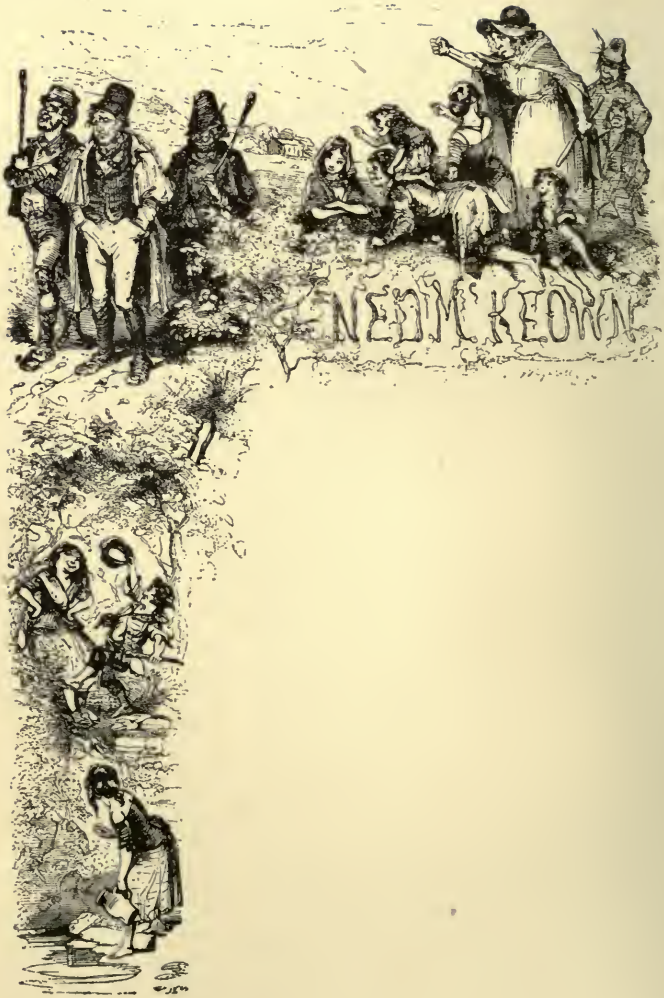
All these things, however, will be found, I trust I may say faithfully, depicted in the following volume—together with many other important features of our general character; which I would dwell on here, were it not that they are detailed very fully in other parts of my works, and I do not wish to deprive them of the force of novelty when they occur, nor to appear heavy by repetition.

In conclusion, I have endeavoured, with what success has been already determined by the voice of my own country, to give a panorama of Irish life among the people—comprising at one view all the strong points of their general

character—their loves, sorrows, superstitions, piety, amusements, crimes, and virtues; and in doing this, I can say with solemn truth that I painted them honestly, and without reference to the existence of any particular creed or party.

W. CARLETON.

DUBLIN, 1842.


NEDM'KEOWN

TRAITS AND STORIES OF

THE IRISH PEASANTRY

NED M'KEOWN

NED M'KEOWN'S house stood exactly in an angle formed by the cross-roads of Kilrudden. It was a long, whitewashed building, well thatched, and furnished with the usual appurtenances of yard and offices. Like most Irish houses of the better sort, it had two doors, one opening into a garden that sloped down from the rear in a southern direction. The barn was a continuation of the dwelling-house, and might be distinguished from it by a darker shade of colour, being only rough-cast. It was situated on a small eminence, but, with respect to the general locality of the country, in a delightful vale, which runs up, for twelve or fourteen miles, between two ranges of dark, well-defined mountains, that give to the interjacent country the form of a low inverted arch. This valley, which altogether, allowing for the occasional breaks and intersections of hill-ranges, extends upwards of thirty miles in length, is the celebrated valley of the "Black Pig," so well known in the politico-traditional history of Ireland, and the legends connected with the famous Beal Dearg.[1] That part of it where

[1] Baldearg (*i.e.*, Red Mark), otherwise Hugh O'Donnell, was a famous character in the War of 1689–91. He was a Donegal man who had served in the Spanish army with distinction. According to an ancient prophecy, his reappearance would mean the deliverance of Ireland, and this the people fully expected. After the battle of Aughrim he went over to the Williamite side, for which he obtained £500 a year. He returned to Spain, where he became a major-general, and died about 1703. See *Macaulay's Hist.*, ch. xvi.—ED.

Ned M'Keown resided was peculiarly beautiful and romantic. From the eminence on which the house stood, a sweep of the most fertile meadow-land stretched away to the foot of a series of intermingled hills and vales which bounded this extensive carpet towards the north. Through these meadows ran a smooth river, called the "Mullin-burn," which wound its way through them with such tortuosity that it was proverbial in the neighbourhood to say of any man remarkable for dishonesty, "He's as crooked as the Mullin-burn"—an epithet which was sometimes, although unjustly, applied to Ned himself. This deep but narrow river had its origin in the glens and ravines of a mountain which bounded the vale in a south-eastern direction; and after sudden and heavy rains it tumbled down with such violence and impetuosity over the crags and rock-ranges in its way, and accumulated so amazingly, that on reaching the meadows it inundated their surface, carrying away sheep, cows, and cocks of hay upon its yellow flood. It also boiled and eddied, and roared with a hoarse *sugh* that was heard at a considerable distance.

On the north-west side ran a ridge of high hills, with the cloud-capped peak of Knockmany rising in lofty eminence above them. These, as they extended towards the south, became gradually deeper in their hue, until at length they assumed the shape and form of heath-clad mountains, dark and towering. The prospect on either range is highly pleasing, and capable of being compared with any I have ever seen in softness, variety, and that serene lustre which reposes only on the surface of a country rich in the beauty of fertility, and improved by the hand of industry and taste. Opposite Knockmany, at a distance of about four miles, on the south-eastern side, rose the huge and dark outline of Cullimore, standing out in gigantic relief against the clear blue of a summer sky, and flinging down his frowning and haughty shadow almost to the firm-set base of his lofty rival; or, in winter, wrapped in a mantle of clouds, and crowned with unsullied snow, reposing in undisturbed tranquillity, whilst the loud voice of the storm howled around him.

To the northward, immediately behind Cullimore, lies Althadhawan, a deep, craggy, precipitous glen, running up

to its very base, and studded with oak, hazel, rowan-tree, and holly. This picturesque glen extends two or three miles, until it melts into the softness of grove and meadow in the rich landscape below. Then, again, on the opposite side is Lumford's Glen, with its overhanging rocks, whose yawning depth and silver waterfall, of one hundred and fifty feet, are at once finely and fearfully contrasted with the elevated peak of Knockmany, rising into the clouds above it.

From either side of these mountains may be seen six or eight country towns—the beautiful grouping of hill and plain, lake, river, grove, and dell—the grey reverend cathedral, the whitewashed cottage, and the comfortable farmhouse. To these may be added the wild upland and the cultivated demesne, the green sheep-walk, the dark moor, the splendid mansion, and the ruined castle of former days. Delightful remembrance! Many a day, both of sunshine and storm, have I, in the strength and pride of happy youth, bounded, fleet as the mountain roe, over those blue hills! Many an evening, as the yellow beams of the setting sun shot slantingly, like rafters of gold, across the depth of this blessed and peaceful valley, have I followed, in solitude, the impulses of a wild and wayward fancy, and sought the quiet dell, or viewed the setting sun as he scattered his glorious and shining beams through the glowing foliage of the trees in the vista where I stood; or wandered along the river, whose banks were fringed with the hanging willow, whilst I listened to the thrush singing among the hazels that crowned the sloping green above me, or watched the plashing otter as he ventured from the dark angles and intricacies of the upland glen to seek his prey in the meadow-stream during the favourable dusk of twilight. Many a time have I heard the simple song of Roger M'Cann, coming from the top of brown Dunroe, mellowed, by the stillness of the hour, to something far sweeter to the heart than all that the laboured pomp of musical art and science can effect; or the song of Katty Roy, the beauty of the village, streaming across the purple-flowered moor,

> "Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains."

Many a time, too, have I been gratified, in the same poetical

hour, by the sweet sound of honest Ned M'Keown's ungreased cart-wheels, clacking, when nature seemed to have fallen asleep after the day-stir and animation of rural business—for Ned was sometimes a carman—on his return from Dublin with a load of his own groceries, without as much money in his pocket as would purchase oil wherewith to silence the sounds which the friction produced—regaling his own ears the while, as well as the music of the cart would permit his melody to be heard, with his favourite tune of "The Cannie Soogah." [1]

Honest, blustering, good-humoured Ned was the indefatigable merchant of the village; ever engaged in some ten or twenty pound speculation, the capital of which he was sure to extort, perhaps for the twelfth time, from the savings of Nancy's frugality, by the equivocal test of a month or six weeks' consecutive sobriety, and which said speculation he never failed to wind up by the total loss of the capital for Nancy, and the capital loss of a broken head for himself. Ned had eternally some bargain on his hands: at one time you might see him a yarn-merchant, planted in the next market-town, upon the upper step of Mr. Birnie's [2] hall-door, where the yarn-market was held, surrounded by a crowd of eager countrywomen, anxious to give Ned the preference—first, because he was a well-wisher; secondly, because he hadn't his heart in the penny; and thirdly, because he gave sixpence a spangle more than any other man in the market.

There might Ned be found, with his twenty pounds of hard silver jingling in the bottom of a green bag as a decoy to his customers, laughing loud as he piled the yarn in an ostentatious heap, which, in the pride of his commercial sagacity, he had purchased at a dead loss. Again, you might see him at a horse-fair, cantering about on the back of some sleek but broken-winded jade, with spavined legs, imposed on him as "a great bargain entirely," by the superior cunning of some rustic sharper; or standing over a hogshead of damaged flaxseed, in the purchase of which he shrewdly

[1] "The Jolly Pedlar."

[2] A magistrate in Co. Tyrone, who had befriended Carleton.—ED.

suspected himself of having overreached the seller, by allowing him a greater price for it than the prime seed of the market would have cost him. In short, Ned was never out of a speculation, and whatever he undertook was sure to prove a complete failure. But he had one mode of consolation, which consisted in sitting down with the fag-ends of Nancy's capital in his pocket, and drinking night and day with this neighbour and that whilst a shilling remained; and when he found himself at the end of his tether he was sure to fasten a quarrel on some friend or acquaintance, and to get his head broken for his pains.

None of all this blustering, however, happened within the range of Nancy's jurisdiction. Ned, indeed, might drink and sing, and swagger and fight—and he contrived to do so; but, notwithstanding all his apparent courage, there was one eye which made him quail, and before which he never put on the hector; there was one in whose presence the loudness of his song would fall away into a very awkward and unmusical quaver, and under whose glance his laughing face often changed to the visage of a man who is disposed to anything but mirth.

The fact was this:—Whenever Ned found that his speculation was gone *a shaughran*,[1] as he termed it, he fixed himself in some favourite public-house, from whence he seldom stirred while his money lasted, except when dislodged by Nancy, who usually, upon learning where he had taken cover, paid him an unceremonious visit, to which Ned's indefensible delinquency gave the colour of legitimate authority. Upon these occasions, Nancy, accompanied by two sturdy servant-men, would sally forth to the next market-town, for the purpose of bringing home "graceless Ned," as she called him. And then you might see Ned between the two servants, a few paces in advance of Nancy, having very much the appearance of a man performing a pilgrimage to the gallows, or of a deserter guarded back to his barracks, in order to become a target for the muskets of his comrades. Ned's compulsory return always became a matter of some notoriety; for Nancy's excursion in quest of the "graceless"

[1] Gone astray.

was not made without frequent denunciations of wrath against him, and many melancholy apologies to the neighbours for entering upon the task of personally securing him. By this means her enterprise was sure to get wind, and a mob of all the idle young men and barefooted urchins of the village, with Bob M'Cann, "a three-quarter clift,"[1] or mischievous fellow, half knave, half fool, was to be found a little below the village, upon an elevation of the road that commanded a level stretch of half a mile or so, in anxious expectation of the procession. No sooner had this arrived at the point of observation, than the little squadron would fall rereward of the principal group, for the purpose of extracting from Nancy a full and particular account of the capture.

"Indeed, childher, it's no wonder for yees to inquire! Where did I get him, Dick?—*musha,* and where would I get him but in the ould place, *ahagur*—with the ould set: don't yees know that a dacent place or dacent company wouldn't sarve Ned?—nobody but Shane Martin, and Jimmy Tague, and the other blackguards."

"And what will you do with him, Nancy?"

"Och! thin, Dick, *avourneen,* it's myself that's jist tired thinking of that; at any rate, consuming to the loose foot he'll get this blessed month to come, Dick, *agra!*"

"Throth, Nancy," another mischievous monkey would exclaim, "if you hadn't great patience entirely you couldn't put up with such thratement, at all, at all."

"Why, thin, God knows, it's true for you, Barney. D'ye hear that, 'graceless'? the very childher making a laughing-stock and a 'may game' of you!—but wait till we get under the roof, any how."

"Ned," a third would say, "isn't it a burning shame for you to break the poor crathur's heart this a-way? Throth, but you ought to hould down your head, sure enough—a dacent woman! that only for her you wouldn't have a house over you, so you wouldn't."

"And throth, the same house is going, Tim," Nancy would exclaim, "and when it goes, let him see thin who'll do

[1] This is equal to the proverb, "He wants a square," that is, though knavish, not thoroughly rational.

for him: let him try if his blackguards will stand to him whin he won't have poor foolish Nancy at his back."

During these conversations, Ned would walk on between his two guards, with a dogged-looking and condemned face, Nancy behind him, with his own cudgel, ready to administer an occasional bang whenever he attempted to slacken his pace, or throw over his shoulder a growl of dissent or justification.

On getting near home, the neighbours would occasionally pop out their heads, with a smile of good-humoured satire on their faces, which Nancy was very capable of translating.

"Ay," she would say, addressing them, "I've caught him —here he is to the fore. Indeed, you may well laugh, Katty Rafferty; not a one of myself blames you for it.—Ah, ye mane crathur," aside to Ned, "if you had the blood of a hen in you, you wouldn't have the neighbours braking their hearts laughing at you in sich a way; and above all the people in the world, them Raffertys, that got the decree against us at the last sessions, although I offered to pay within fifteen shillings of the differ—the grubs!"

Having seen her hopeful charge safely deposited on the hob, Nancy would throw her cloak into this corner, and her bonnet into that, with the air of a woman absorbed by the consideration of some vexatious trial; she would then sit down, and, lighting her *dudeen,* exclaim—

"*Wurrah, wurrah!* but it's me that's the heart-scalded crathur with that man's four quarters! The Lord may help me, and grant me patience with him, any way!—to have my little, honest, hard-earned penny spint among a pack of vagabonds, that don't care if him and me wor both down the river, so they could get their skinful of drink out of him. No matther, *agra!* things can't long be this a-way—but what does Ned care?—give him drink and fighting, and his blackguards about him, and that's his glory. There now's the landlord coming down upon us for the rint, and unless he takes the cows out of the byre, or the bed from anundher us, what in the wide earth is there for him?"

The current of this lecture was never interrupted by a single observation from Ned, who usually employed himself in silently playing with "Bunty," a little black cur without

a tail, and a great favourite with Nancy; or, if he noticed anything out of its place in the house, he would arrange it with great apparent care. In the meantime Nancy's wrath generally evaporated with the smoke of the pipe—a circumstance which Ned well knew;—for after she had sucked it until it emitted a shrill bubbling sound, like that from a reed, her brows, which wore at other times an habitual frown, would gradually relax into a more benevolent expression—the parenthetical curves on each side of her mouth, formed by the irascible pursing of her lips, would become less marked—the dog or cat, or whatever else came in her way, instead of being kicked aside, or pursued in an underfit of digressional peevishness, would be put out of her path with gentler force; so that it was, in such circumstances, a matter of little difficulty to perceive that conciliation would soon be the order of the day. Ned's conduct on these critical occasions was very prudent and commendable; he still gave Nancy her own way, never "jawed back to her," but took shelter, as it were, under his own patience, until the storm had passed, and the sun of her good-humour began to shine again. Nancy herself, now softened by the fumes of her own pigtail, usually made the first overtures to a compromise, but without departing from the practice and principles of higher negotiators—always in an indirect manner; as, "Judy, *avourneen*," speaking to the servant, "maybe that crathur," pointing to Ned, "ate nothing to-day; you had better, *agra*, get him the cowld bacon that's in the cupboard, and warm for him, upon the *greeshaugh*,[1] them yallow-legs[2] that's in the colindher, though God He knows it's ill my common[3]—but no matter, *ahagur*, there's enough said, I'm thinking—give them to him."

On Ned seating himself to his bacon and potatoes, Nancy would light another pipe, and plant herself on the opposite hob, putting some interrogatory to him in the way of business—always concerning a third person, and still in a tone of dry ironical indifference—as—

"Did you see Jimmy Conolly on your travels?"

"No."

[1] Hot embers. [2] A kind of potato. [3] It ill becomes me.

"Humph! Can you tell us if Andy Morrow sould his coult?"

"He did."

"Maybe you have gumption enough to know what he got for him?"

"Fifteen guineas."

"In throth, and it's more nor a poor body would get; but, any way, Andy Morrow desarves to get a good price; he's a man that takes care of his own business, and minds nothing else. I wish that filly of ours was dockt; you ought to spake to Jim M'Quade about her: it's time to make her up—you know we'll want to sell her for the rint."

This was an assertion, by the way, which Ned knew to have everything but truth in it.

"Never heed the filly," Ned would reply; "I'll get Charley Lawdher to dock her—but it's not her I'm thinking of: did you hear the news about the tobacky?"

"No, but I hope we won't be long so."

"Well, any how, we wor in luck to buy in them three last rowls."

"Eh? in luck! death alive, how, Ned?"

"Sure there was three ships of it lost last week, on their way from the kingdom of Swuzzerland in the Aist Indians, where it grows: we can raise it thruppence a pound now."

"No, Ned! you're not in arnest?"

"Nancy, you may say I am; and as soon as Tom Loan comes home from Dublin he'll tell us all about it; and for that matther, maybe, may rise it sixpence a pound: any how, we'll gain a lob[1] by it, I'm thinking."

"May I never stir! but that's luck. Well, Ned, you may thank me for that, any way, or not a rowl we'd have in the four corners of the house—and you wanted to persuade me against buying thim; but I knew betther—for the tobacky's always sure to get a bit of a hitch at this time o' the year."

"Bedad, you can do it, Nancy, I'll say that for you—that's and give you your own way."

"Eh! can't I, Ned?—and what was betther, I bate down

[1] A great deal—a lump.

Pether M'Entee three-ha'pence a pound afther I bought them."

"Ha! ha! ha! by my *sannies*, Nancy, as to market-making, they may all throw their caps at you, you thief o' the world; you can do them nately."

"Ha! ha! ha! Stop, Ned, don't drink that water—it's not from the rock well; I'll jist mix a sup of this last stuff we got from the mountains, till you taste it. I think it's not worse nor the last—for Hugh Traynor's an ould hand at making it."

This was all Ned wanted; his point was now carried: but with respect to the rising of the tobacco, the less said about that the better for his veracity.

Having thus given the reader a slight sketch of Ned and Nancy, and of the beautiful valley in which this worthy speculator had his residence, I shall next proceed to introduce him to the village circle, which, during the long winter nights, might be found in front of Ned's kitchen fire of blazing turf, whose light was given back in ruddy reflection from the bright pewter plates that were ranged upon the white and well-scoured dresser in just and gradual order, from the small egg-plate to the large and capacious dish, whereon, at Christmas and Easter, the substantial round of corned beef used to rear itself so proudly over the more ignoble joints at the lower end of the table.

Seated in this clear-obscure of domestic light, which, after all, gives the heart a finer and more touching notion of enjoyment than the glitter of the theatre or the blaze of the saloon, might be found—first, Andy Morrow, the jury-man of the quarter-sessions, sage and important in the consciousness of legal knowledge, and somewhat dictatorial withal in its application to such knotty points as arose out of the subjects of their nocturnal debates. Secondly, Bob Gott, who filled the foreign and military departments, and related the wonderful history of the ghost which appeared to him on the night after the battle of Bunker's Hill. To him succeeded Tom M'Roarkin, the little asthmatic anecdotarian of half the country, remarkable for chuckling at his own stories. Then came old Bill M'Kinny, poacher and horse-jockey; little, squeaking, thin-faced Alick M'Kinley,

a facetious farmer of substance; and Shane Fadh, who handed down traditions and fairy-tales. Enthroned on one hob sat Pat Frayne, the schoolmaster, with the short arm, who read and explained the newspaper for "Ould Square Colwell," and was looked upon as premier to the aforesaid cabinet. Ned himself filled the opposite seat of honour.

One night, a little before the Christmas holidays, in the year 18—, the personages just described were seated around Ned's fire, some with their chirping pints of ale or porter, and others with their quantum of "Hugh Traynor," or mountain dew, and all with good-humour and a strong tendency to happiness visible in their faces. The night was dark, close, and misty—so dark, indeed, that, as Nancy said, "you could hardly see your finger before you." Ned himself was full of fun, with a pint of porter beside him, and a pipe in his mouth, just in his glory for the night. Opposite to him was Pat Frayne, with an old newspaper on his knee, which he had just perused for the edification of his audience; beside him was Nancy, busily employed in knitting a pair of sheep's-grey stockings for Ned; the remaining personages formed a semicircular ring about the hearth. Behind, on the kitchen-table, sat Paddy Smith, the servant man, with three or four of the *gorsoons* of the village about him, engaged in a little under-plot of their own. On the other side, and a little removed from the light, sat Ned's two nieces, Biddy and Bessy Connolly, the former with Atty Johnston's mouth within whisper-reach of her ear, and the latter seated close to her professed admirer, Billy Fulton, her uncle's shopman. This group was completely abstracted from the entertainment which was going forward in the circle round the fire.

"I wondher," said Andy Morrow, "what makes Joe M'Crea throw down that fine ould castle of his, in Aughentain?"

"I'm tould," said M'Roarkin, "that he expects money; for they say there's a lot of it buried somewhere about the same building."

"Jist as much as there's in my wig," replied Shane Fadh, "and there's ne'er a pocket to it yet. Why, bless your sowl, how could there be money in it, whin the last man of the Grameses that own'd it—I mane of the ould stock, afore it went into Lord Mountjoy's hands—sould it out, ran through

the money, and died begging afther. Did none of you ever hear of

'Ould John Grame,
That swally'd the castle of Aughentain'?"

"That was long afore my time," said the poacher; "but I know that the rabbit burrow between that and Jack Appleton's garden will soon be run out."

"Your time!" responded Shane Fadh, with contempt; "ay, and your father's afore you: my father doesn't remimber more nor seeing his funeral, and a merry one it was; for my grandfather, and some of them that had a respect for the family and his forbarers, if they hadn't it for himself, made up as much money among them as berried him dacently, any how—ay, and gave him a rousin' wake into the bargain, with lashins of whisky, stout beer, and ale; for in them times—God be with them—every farmer brewed his own ale and beer; more betoken, that one pint of it was worth a keg of this wash of yours, Ned."

"Wasn't it he that used to *appear?*" inquired M'Roarkin.

"Sure enough he did, Tom."

"Lord save us," said Nancy, "what could trouble him, I dunna?"

"Why," continued Shane Fadh, "some said one thing, and some another; but the upshot of it was this: when the last of the Grameses sould the estate, castle and all, it seems he didn't resave all the purchase-money; so, afther he had spint what he got, he applied to the purchaser for the remainder—him that the Mountjoy family bought it from; but it seems he didn't draw up writings, or sell it according to law, so that the thief o' the world baffled him from day to day, and wouldn't give him a penny—bekase he knew, the blaggard, that the Square was then as poor as a church mouse, and hadn't money enough to thry it at law with him; but the Square was always a simple, asy-going man. One day he went to this fellow, riding on an ould *garran*, with a shoe loose—the only baste he had in the world—and axed him, for God's sake, to give him some of what he owed him, if it was ever so little; 'for,' says he, 'I have not as much money betune me and death as will get a set of shoes for my horse.'"

"'Well,' says the nager, 'if you're not able to keep your horse shod, I would jist recommend you to sell him, and thin his shoes won't cost you anything,' says he.

"The old Square went away with tears in his eyes, for he loved the poor brute, bekase they wor the two last branches of the ould stock."

"Why," inquired M'Kinley, in his small, squeaking voice, "was the horse related to the family?"

"I didn't say he was related to the fam——Get out, you *shingaun!*" returned the old man, perceiving, by the laugh that now went round, the sly tendency of the question. "No, not to your family either, for he had nothing of the ass in him—eh? will ye put that in your pocket, my little *skinadhre*[1] —ha! ha! ha!"

The laugh was now turned against M'Kinley.

Shane Fadh proceeded: "The ould Square, as I was tellin' yees, cried to find himself an' the poor baste so dissolute, but when he had gone a bit from the fellow he comes back to the vagabone. 'Now,' says he, 'mind my words—if you happen to live afther me, you need never expect a night's pace; for I here make a serous an' solemn vow, that as long as my property's in your possession, or in any of your seed, breed, or ginerations, I'll never give over hauntin' you an' them, till you'll rue to the backbone your dishonesty an' chathery to me an' this poor baste that hasn't a shoe to its foot.'

"'Well,' says the nager, 'I'll take chance of that, any way.'"

"I'm tould, Shane," observed the poacher, "that the Square was a fine man in his time, that wouldn't put up with such thratement from anybody."

"Ay, but he was ould now," Shane replied, "and too wakely to fight. A fine man, Bill!—he was the finest man, 'ceptin' ould Square Storey, that ever was in this counthry. I hard my grandfather often say that he was six feet four, and made in proportion—a handsome, black-a-vis'd[2] man, with great dark whiskers. Well! he spint money like sklates, and so he died miserable—but had a merry birrel, as I said."

[1] A thin, fleshless, stunted person.

[2] Black-visaged.

"But," inquired Nancy, "did he ever appear to the rogue that chated him?"

"Every night in the year, Nancy, exceptin' Sundays; and what was more, the horse along with him—for he used to come ridin' at midnight upon the same *garran;* and it was no matther what place or company the other 'ud be in, the ould Square would come regularly, and crave him for what he owed him."

"So it appears that horses have sowls," observed M'Roarkin philosophically, giving, at the same time, a cynical chuckle at the sarcasm of his own conceit.

"Whether they have sowls or bodies," replied the narrator, "what I'm tellin' you is the thruth: every night in the year the ould chap would come for what was indue him; and, as the two went along, the noise of the loose shoe upon the horse would be hard rattlin', and seen knockin' the fire out of the stones, by the neighbours and the thief that chated him, even before the Square would appear, at all, at all."

"Oh, *wurrah!*" exclaimed Nancy, shuddering with terror, "I wouldn't take anything, and be out now on the Drumfurrar road, and nobody with me but myself."

"I think if you wor," said M'Kinley, "the light weights and short measures would be coming acrass your conscience."

"No, in throth, Alick, wouldn't they; but maybe, if you wor, the promise you broke to Sally Mitchell might trouble you a bit. At any rate, I've a prayer, and if I only repated it wanst, I mightn't be afeard of all the divils in hell."

"Throth, but it's worth havin', Nancy: where did you get it?" asked M'Kinley.

"Hould your wicked tongue, you thief of a heretic," said Nancy, laughing; "when will you larn anything that's good? I got it from one that wouldn't have it if it wasn't good—Darby M'Murt, the pilgrim, since you must know."

"Whisht!" said Frayne. "Upon my word, I believe the ould Square's comin' to pay us a visit; does any of yees hear a horse trottin' with a shoe loose?"

"I sartinly hear it," observed Andy Morrow.

"And I," said Ned himself.

There was now a general pause, and in the silence a horse,

proceeding from the moors in the direction of the house, was distinctly heard; and nothing could be less problematical than that one of his shoes was loose.

"Boys, take care of yourselves," said Shane Fadh; "if the Square comes, he won't be a pleasant customer—he was a terrible fellow in his day; I'll hould goold to silver that he'll have the smell of brimstone about him."

"Nancy, where's your prayer now?" said M'Kinley, with a grin. "I think you had betther out with it, and thry if it keeps this ould brimstone Square on the wrong side of the house."

"Behave yourself, Alick; it's a shame for you to be sich a hardened crathur. Upon my sannies, I blieve you're afeard of neither God nor the divil—the Lord purtect and guard us from the dirty baste!"

"You mane particklarly them that uses short measures and light weights," rejoined M'Kinley.

There was another pause, for the horseman was within a few perches of the cross-roads. At this moment an unusual gust of wind, accompanied by torrents of rain, burst against the house with a violence that made its ribs creak; and the stranger's horse, the shoe still clanking, was distinctly heard to turn in from the road to Ned's door, where it stopped, and the next moment a loud knocking intimated the horseman's intention to enter. The company now looked at each other, as if uncertain what to do. Nancy herself grew pale, and, in the agitation of the moment, forgot to think of her protecting prayer. Biddy and Bessy Connolly started from the settle on which they had been sitting with their sweethearts, and sprung beside their uncle on the hob. The stranger was still knocking with great violence, yet there was no disposition among the company to admit him, notwithstanding the severity of the night—blowing, as it really did, a perfect hurricane. At length a sheet of lightning flashed through the house, followed by an amazing loud clap of thunder; while, with a sudden push from without, the door gave way, and in stalked a personage whose stature was at least six feet four, with dark eyes and complexion, and coal-black whiskers of an enormous size, the very image of the Squire they had been describing. He was dressed in a long black surtout, which made him

appear even taller than he actually was, had a pair of heavy boots upon him, and carried a tremendous whip, large enough to fell an ox. He was in a rage on entering; and the heavy, dark, close-knit brows, from beneath which a pair of eyes, equally black, shot actual fire, and the Turk-like whiskers, which curled themselves up, as it were, in sympathy with his fury, joined to his towering height, gave him altogether, when we consider the frame of mind in which he found the company, an appalling and almost supernatural appearance.

"Confound you, for a knot of lazy scoundrels," exclaimed the stranger. "Why do you sit here so calmly while any being craves admittance on such a night as this? Here, you lubber in the corner, with the pipe in your mouth, come and put up this horse of mine until the night settles."

"May the blessed Mother purtect us!" exclaimed Nancy, in a whisper to Andy Morrow, "if I blieve he's a right thing! —would it be the ould Square? Did you ever set your eyes upon sich a——"

"Will you bestir yourself, you boor, and not keep my horse and saddle out under such a torrent?" he cried, "otherwise I must only bring him into the house, and then you may say for once that you've had the devil under your roof."

"Paddy Smith, you lazy *spalpeen*," said Nancy, winking at Ned to have nothing to do with the horse, "why don't you fly and put up the gintleman's horse? And you, Atty, *avourneen*, jist go out with him, and hould the candle while he's doin' it; be quick now, and I'll give you glasses apiece when you come in."

"Let them put him up quickly; but I say, you Caliban," added the stranger, addressing Smith, "don't be rash about him, except you can bear fire and brimstone; get him, at all events, a good feed of oats. Poor Satan!" he continued, patting the horse's head, which was now within the door, "you have had a hard night of it, my poor Satan, as well as myself. That's my dark spirit—my brave chuck, that fears neither man nor devil."

This language was by no means calculated to allay the suspicions of those who were present, particularly of Nancy and her two nieces. Ned sat in astonishment, with the pipe in his hand, which he had, in the surprise of the moment, taken

from his mouth, his eyes fixed upon the stranger, and his mouth open. The latter noticed him, and, stretching over the heads of the circle, tapped him on the shoulder with his whip.

"I have a few words to say to you, sir," he said.

"To me, your honour!" exclaimed Ned, without stirring, however.

"Yes," replied the other; "but you seem to be fastened to your seat: come this way.'

"By all manner of manes, sir," said Ned, starting up, and going over to the dresser, against which the stranger stood.

When the latter had got him there, he very coolly walked up, and secured Ned's comfortable seat on the hob, at the same time observing:

"You hadn't the manners to ask me to sit down; but I always make it a point of conscience to take care of myself, landlord."

There was not a man about the fire who did not stand up, as if struck with a sudden recollection, and offer him a seat.

"No," said he, "thank you, my good fellows, I am very well as it is. I suppose, mistress, you are the landlady," addressing Nancy; "if you be, I'll thank you to bring me a gill of your best whisky—your best, mind. Let it be as strong as an evil spirit let loose, and as hot as fire; for it can't be a jot too ardent such a night as this, for a being that rides the devil."

Nancy started up instinctively, exclaiming, "Indeed, plase your honour's reverence, I am the landlady, as you say, sir, sure enough; but, the Lord save and guard us! won't a gallon of raw whisky be too much for one man to drink?"

"A gallon! I only said a gill, my good hostess; bring me a gill;—but I forgot—I believe you have no such measure in this country; bring me a pint, then."

Nancy now went into the bar, whither she gave Ned a wink to follow her, and truly she was glad of an opportunity of escaping from the presence of the visitor. When there, she ejaculated:

"May the holy Mother keep and guard us, Ned, but I'm afeard that's no Christian crathur, at all, at all! *Arrah*, Ned,

aroon, would he be that ould Square Grame, that Shane Fadh maybe angered by spakin' of him?"

"Troth," said Ned, "myself doesn't know what he is; he bates any mortal I ever seen."

"Well, hould, *agra!* I have it: we'll see whether he'll drink this or not, any how."

"Why, what's that you're doin'?" asked Ned.

"Jist," replied Nancy, "mixin' the smallest taste in the world of holy wather with the whisky, and if he drinks that, you know he can be nothing that's bad."

Nancy, however, did not perceive that the trepidation of her hand was such as to incapacitate her from making nice distinctions in the admixture. She now brought the spirits to the stranger, who no sooner took a mouthful of it than he immediately stopped it on its passage, and, fixing his eyes earnestly on Nancy, squirted it into the fire, and the next moment the whisky was in a blaze that seemed likely to set the chimney in flames.

"Why, my honest hostess," he exclaimed, "do you give this to me for whisky? Confound me, but two-thirds of it is water; and I have no notion to pay for water when I want spirits: have the goodness to exchange this, and get me some better stuff, if you have it."

He again put the jug to his mouth, and having taken a little, swallowed it: "Why, I tell you, woman, you must have made some mistake; one-half of it is water."

Now, Nancy, from the moment he refused to swallow the liquor, had been lock-jawed; the fact was, she thought that the devil himself, or old Squire Graham, had got under her roof; and she stood behind Ned, who was nearly as terrified as herself, with her hands raised, her tongue clinging to the roof of her mouth, and the perspiration falling from her pale face in large drops. But as soon as she saw him swallow a portion of that liquid, which she deemed beyond the deglutition of ghost or devil, she instantly revived—her tongue resumed its accustomed office—her courage, as well as her good-humour, returned, and she went up to him with great confidence, saying:

"Why, then, your reverence's honour, maybe I did make a bit of a mistake, sir," taking up the jug, and tasting its con-

tents. "Hut! bad scran to me, but I did, beggin' your honour's pardon; how-an-diver, I'll soon rightify that, your reverence."

So saying, she went and brought him a pint of the stoutest the house afforded. The stranger drank a glass of it, and then ordered hot water and sugar, adding:

"My honest friends here about the fire will have no objection to help me with this; but, on second consideration, you had better get us another quart, that, as the night is cold, we may have a jorum at this pleasant fire that will do our hearts good; and this pretty girl here," addressing Biddy, who really deserved the epithet, "will sit beside me, and give us a song."

It was surprising what an effect the punch, even in perspective, had upon the visual organs of the company; second sight was rather its precursor than its attendant; for, with intuitive penetration, they now discovered various good qualities in his ghostship that had hitherto been beyond their ken; and those very personal properties which before struck them dumb with terror already called forth their applause.

"What a fine man he is!" one would whisper, loud enough, however, to be heard by the object of his panegyric.

"He is, indeed, and a rale gintleman," another would respond, in the same key.

"Hut! he's none of your proud, stingy, upsthart *bodaghs*—none of your beggarly half-sirs," a third would remark; "he's the dacent thing entirely—you see he hasn't his heart in a thrifle."

"And so sign's on him," a fourth would add; "he wasn't bred to shabbiness, as you may know by his fine behaviour and his big whiskers."

When the punch was made, and the kitchen-table placed endwise towards the fire, the stranger, finding himself very comfortable, inquired if he could be accommodated with a bed and supper, to which Nancy replied in the affirmative.

"Then, in that case," said he, "I will be your guest for the night."

Shane Fadh now took courage to repeat the story of old Squire Graham and his horse with the loose shoe, informing

the stranger, at the same time, of the singular likeness which he bore to the subject of the story, both in face and size, and dwelling upon the remarkable coincidence in the time and manner of his approach.

"Tut, man!" said the stranger, "a far more extraordinary adventure happened to one of my father's tenants, which, if none of you have any objection, I will relate."

There 'was a buzz of approbation at this; and they all thanked his honour, expressing the strongest desire to hear his story. He was just proceeding to gratify them, when another rap came to the door, and, before any of the inmates had time to open it, Father Neddy Deleery and his curate made their appearance, having been on their way home from a conference held in the town of M——, eighteen miles from the scene of our present story.

It may be right here to inform the reader that about two hundred yards from Ned's house stood a place of Roman Catholic worship, called "The Forth," from the resemblance it bore to the Forts or Raths so common in Ireland. It was a small green, perfectly circular, and about twenty yards in diameter. Around it grew a row of old overspreading hawthorns, whose branches formed a canopy that almost shaded it from sun and storm. Its area was encompassed by tiers of seats, one raised above another, and covered with the flowery grass. On these the congregation used to sit—the young men probably swearing-in a Ribbonman, or ogling their sweethearts on the opposite side; the old ones in little groups, discussing the politics of the day as retailed by Mick M'Caffry, the politician; while up near the altar, hemmed in by a ring of old men and women, you might perceive a voteen,[1] repeating some new prayer or choice piece of devotion; or some other, in a similar circle, perusing, in a loud voice, Doctor Gallagher's Irish Sermons, Pastorini's "History of the Christian Church," or Columbkill's Prophecy; and, perhaps, a strolling pilgrim, the centre of a third collection, singing the *Dies iræ* in Latin, or the "Hermit of Killarney" in English.

At the extremity of this little circle was a plain altar of

[1] Devotee.

wood, covered with a little thatched shed, under which the priest celebrated mass; but before the performance of this ceremony a large multitude usually assembled opposite Ned's shop-door, at the cross-roads. This crowd consisted of such as wanted to buy tobacco, candles, soap, potash, and such other groceries as the peasantry remote from market-towns require. After mass, the public-house was filled to the door-posts with those who wished to get a sample of Nancy's *Iska-behagh;*[1] and many a time has little Father Neddy himself, of a frosty day, after having performed mass with a celerity highly agreeable to his auditory, come in to Nancy, nearly frost-bitten, to get a toothful of mountain dew, to drive the cold out of his stomach.

The fact is, that Father Neddy Deleery made himself quite at home at Ned's, without any reference to Nancy's saving habits; the consequence was that her welcome to him was extremely sincere—"from the teeth out." Father Ned saw perfectly through her assumed heartiness of manner, but acted as if the contrary was the case. Nancy understood him also, and, with an intention of making up by complaisance for her niggardliness in other respects, was a perfect honeycomb. This state of cross purposes, however, could not last long—neither did it. Father Ned never paid, and Nancy never gave credit; so, at length, they came to an open rupture: she threatened to process him for what he owed her, and he, in return, threatened to remove the congregation from "The Forth" to Ballymagowan-bridge, where he intended to set up his nephew, Bill Buckley, in the "public line," to the ruin of Nancy's flourishing establishment.

"Father Ned," said Nancy, "I'm a hard-working, honest woman, and I don't see why my substance is to be wasted by your reverence, when you won't pay for it."

"And do you forget," Father Ned would reply, "that it's me that brings you your custom? Don't you know that if I remove my flock to Ballymagowan you'll soon sing to another tune? So lay that to your heart."

"Troth, I know that whatever I get I'm obliged to pay for it; and I think every man should do the same, Father

[1] *Usquebagh*—literally, "water of life,"

Ned. You must get a hank of yarn from me, and a bushel or two of oats from Ned, and your riglar dues along with all; but, *avourneen*, it's yourself that wouldn't raise your hand over us if we wor in the last gasp, for all that, without getting the silver."

"Salvation to me, but you'd skin a flint!"

"Well, if I would, I pay my debts first."

"You do?"

"Yes, troth, do I."

"Why, then, that's more than you'll be able to do long, plase the fates."

"If all my customers wor like your reverence, it is."

"I'll tell you what it is, Nancy, I often threatened to take the congregation from 'The Forth,' and I'll do it—if I don't, may I never sup sorrow!"

Big with such a threat, Father Neddy retired. The apprehensions of Nancy on this point, however, were more serious than she was willing to acknowledge. This dispute took place a few days before the night in question.

Father Neddy was a little man, with a red face, slender legs, and flat feet; he was usually cased in a pair of ribbed minister's grey small-clothes, with leggings of the same material. His coat, which was much too short, rather resembled a jerkin, and gave him altogether an appearance very much at variance with an idea of personal gravity or reverence. Over this dress he wore, in winter, a dark great-coat, with high collar, that buttoned across his face, showing only the point of his red nose; so that, when riding or walking, his hat rested more upon the collar of his coat than upon his head.

The curate was a tall, raw-boned young man, with high jutting cheek-bones, low forehead, and close knees; to his shoulders, which were very high, hung a pair of long bony arms, whose motions seemed rather the effect of machinery than volition; his hair, which was a bad black, was cropped close, and trimmed across his eyebrows; the small-clothes he wore were of the same web which had produced Father Neddy's; and his body-coat was a dark blue, with black buttons. Each wore a pair of grey woollen mittens.

"There, Pether," said Father Ned, as he entered, "hook

my bridle along with your own, as your hand is in.—God save all here! Paddy Smith, *ma bouchal,* put these horses in the stable, till we dry ourselves a bit—Father Pether and I."

"*Musha,* but you're both welcome," said Nancy, wishing to wipe out the effects of the last tiff with Father Neddy, by the assistance of the stranger's punch. "Will ye bounce, ye *spalpeens,* and let them to the fire. Father Neddy, you're dhreepin' with the rain; and Father Pether, *avourneen,* you're wet to the skin, too."

"Troth, and he is, Nancy, and a little bit farther, if you knew but all—four tumblers, Ned—deuce a *spudh* less. Mr. Morrow, how do you do, sir? And—eh?—who's this we've got in the corner? A gintleman, boys, if cloth can make one! Mr. Morrow, introduce me."

"Indeed, Father Ned, I haven't the pleasure of knowin' the gintleman myself."

"Well, no matter—come up, Pether. Sir, I have the honour of introducing you to my curate and coadjuthor, the Reverend Pether M'Clatchaghan, and to myself, his excellent friend, but spiritual superior, the Reverend Ned—hem!—the Reverend Edward Deleery, Roman Catholic rector of this highly respectable and extensive parish; and I have further the pleasure," he continued, taking up Andy Morrow's punch, "of drinking your very good health, sir."

"And I have the honour," returned the stranger, rising up, and driving his head among the flitches of bacon that hung in the chimney, "of introducing you and the Rev. M'—M'—M'——"

"—Clatchaghan, sir," subjoined Father Ned.

"Peter M'Illclatchaghan, to Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus."

"My word, sir, but it's a good and appropriate name, sure enough," said Father Ned, surveying his enormous length: "success to me, but you're an Alexandrine from head to foot —*non solum Longinus, sed Alexandrinus.*"

"You're wrong, sir, in the Latin," said Father Peter.

"Prove it, Pether—prove it."

"It should be *non tantum,* sir."

"By what rule, Pether?"

"Why, sir, there's a phrase in Corderius's 'Colloquies' that I could condimn you from, if I had the book."

"Pether, you think you're a scholar, and, to do you justice, you're 'cute enough sometimes; but, Pether, you didn't travel for it, as I did—nor were you obliged to leap out of a college windy in Paris, at the time of the French Revolution, for your larning, as I was: not you, man; you ate the king's mutton comfortably at home in Maynooth, instead of travelling for it, like your betters."

"I'll appale to this gintleman," said Father Peter, turning to the stranger. "Are you a classical scholar, sir—that is, do you understand Latin?"

"What kind?" demanded the stranger drily.

"If you have read Corderius's 'Colloquies,' it will do," said Father Peter.

"No, sir," replied the other; "but I have read his commentator, Bardolphus, who wrote a treatise upon the *Ogalvus* of the ancients."

"Well, sir, if you did, it's probable that you may be able to understand our dispute, so——"

"Pether, I'm afeard you've gotten into the wrong box; for I say he's no chicken that read Bardolphus, I can tell you that; I had my own trouble with him. But, at any rate, will you take your punch, man alive, and don't bother us with your Latin."

"I beg your pardon, Father Ned—I insist that I'm right; and I'll convince you that you're wrong, if God spares me to see Corderius to-morrow."

"Very well, then, Pether, if you're to decide it to-morrow, let us have no more of it to-night."

During this conversation between the two reverend worthies, the group around the fire were utterly astonished at the erudition displayed in this learned dispute.

"Well, to be sure, larnin's a great thing, entirely," said M'Roarkin, aside, to Shane Fadh.

"Ah, Tom, there's nothing like it—well, any way, it's wondherful what they know!"

"Indeed, it is, Shane—and in so short a time, too! Sure, it's not more nor five or six years since Father Pether there used to be digging praties on the one ridge with myself—by

the same token, an excellent spadesman he was—and now he knows more nor all the Protestant parsons in the Diocy."

"Why, how could they know anything, when they don't belong to the thrue Church?" said Shane.

"Thrue for you, Shane," replied M'Roarkin; "I disremimbered that clincher."

This discourse ran parallel with the dispute between the two priests, but in so low a tone as not to reach the ear of the classical champions, who would have ill brooked this eulogium upon Father Peter's agricultural talent.

"Don't bother us, Pether, with your arguing to-night," said Father Neddy; "it's enough for you to be seven days in the week at your disputation.—Sir, I drink to our better acquaintance."

"With all my heart, sir," replied the stranger.

"Father Ned," said Nancy, "the gintleman was going to tell us a sthrange story, sir, and maybe your reverence would wish to hear it, Docthor."

"Certainly, Nancy, we'll be very happy to hear any story the gintleman may plase to tell us; but, Nancy, *achora*, before he begins, what if you'd just fry a slice or two of that glorious flitch, hanging over his head, in the corner?—that, and about six eggs, Nancy, and you'll have the priest's blessing, gratis."

"Why, Father Ned, it's too fresh, entirely—sure it's not a week hanging yet."

"Sorra matter, Nancy *dheelish*, we'll take with all that—just try your hand at a slice of it. I rode eighteen miles, and took four tumblers since I dined, and I feel a craving, Nancy, a whackuum in my stomach, that's rather troublesome."

"To be sure, Father Ned, you must get a slice, with all the veins of my heart; but I thought maybe you wouldn't like it so fresh. But what on earth will we do for eggs, for there's not an egg undher the roof with me."

"Biddy, *ahagur*," said Father Ned, "just slip out to Molshey Johnston, and tell her to send me six eggs for a rasher, by the same token that I heard two or three hens cackling in the byre as I was going to Conference this morning."

"Well, Docthor," said Pat Frayne, when Biddy had been gone some time, on which embassy she delayed longer than

the priest's judgment, influenced by the cravings of his stomach, calculated to be necessary—"Well, Docthor, I often pity you for fasting so long; I'm sure, I dunna how you can stand it at all, at all."

"Troth, and you may well wonder, Pat; but we have *that* to support us, that you, or any one like you, know nothing about—inward support, Pat—inward support."

"Only for that, Father Ned," said Shane Fadh, "I suppose you could never get through with it."

"Very right, Shane—very right: only for it, we never could do. What the dickens is keeping this girl with the eggs?—why, she might be at Mr. Morrow's, here, since. By the way, Mr. Morrow, you must come over to our Church; you're a good neighbour, and a worthy fellow, and it's a thousand pities you should be damned."

"Why, Docthor," said Andy, "do you really believe I'll be damned?"

"Ah, Mr. Morrow, don't ask me that question—out of the pale, you know—out of the pale."

"Then you think, sir, there's no chance for me at all," said Andy, smiling.

"Not the laste, Andy; you must go this way," said Father Ned, striking the floor with the butt end of his whip, "to the lower regions; and, upon my knowledge, to tell you the truth, I'm sorry for it, for you're a worthy fellow."

"Ah, Docthor," said Ned, "it's a great thing entirely to be born in the true Church—one's always sure, then."

"Ay, ay; you may say that, Ned," returned the priest; "come or go what will, a man's always safe at the long-run, except he dies without his clargy. Shane, hand me the jug, if you please. Where did you get this stuff, Nancy?—faith, it's excellent."

"You forget, Father Ned, that that's a sacret. But here's Biddy with the eggs, and now you'll have your rasher in no time."

During this conversation, Father Peter, turning to Alick M'Kinley, said, "Alick, isn't your eldest son at the Latin?"

"He is, sir," said Alick.

"How long is he at it, Alick?"

"About six months, sir."

"And do you know what book he's reading?"

"Not a one of myself knows," said Alick, "but I know he has a great batch of them."

"You couldn't tell me if he has got a 'Cordery'?"

"He has, sir," said Alick, "a jacket and trousers of it."

"Of what?" said the curate, looking at him with surprise.

"Of corduroy," said the other.

"Oh, I mean a book!" said Father Peter.

"Consumin' to the know I know what's the name of one of them," replied Alick.

"I wish to heavens I had one, till I'd confute that man!" said Father Peter, looking with a most mortified visage into the fire.

When the two clergymen had discussed the rashers and eggs, and while the happy group were making themselves intimately acquainted with a fresh jug of punch, as it circulated round the table:

"Now, sir," said Father Ned to the stranger, "we'll hear your story with the greatest satisfaction possible; but I think you might charge your tumbler before you set to it."

When the stranger had complied with this last hint: "Well, gentlemen," said he, "as I am rather fatigued, will you excuse me for the position I am about to occupy, which is simply to stretch myself along the hob here, with my head upon this straw hassock; and if you have no objection to that, I will relate the story."

To this, of course, a general assent was given. When he was stretched completely at his ease—

"Well, upon my veracity," observed Father Peter, "the gentleman's supernaturally long."

"Yes, Pether," replied Father Neddy, "but observe his position—*Polysyllaba cuncta supina*, as Prosody says. Arrah, salvation to me, but you're dull, man, afther all!—but we're interrupting the gentleman. Sir, go on, if you plase, with your story."

"Give me a few minutes," said he, "until I recollect the particulars."

He accordingly continued quiescent for two or three minutes more, apparently arranging the materials of his intended narration, and then commenced to gratify the eager

expectations of his auditory—by emitting those nasal enunciations which are the usual accompaniments of sleep!

"Why, bad luck to the morsel of 'im but's asleep," said Ned; "Lord pardon me for swearin' in your reverence's presence."

"That's certainly the language of a sleeping man," replied Father Neddy; "but there might have been a little more respect than all that snoring comes to. Your health, boys!"

The stranger had now wound up his nasal organ to a high pitch, after which he commenced again with somewhat of a lower and finer tone.

"He's beginning a new paragraph," observed Father Peter, with a smile at the joke.

"Not at all," said Father Neddy, "he's turning the tune; don't you perceive he's snoring, 'God save the King,' in the key of *bass relievo?*"

"I'm no judge of instrumental music, as you are," said the curate, "but I think it's liker the 'Dead March of Saul' than 'God save the King;' however, if you be right, the gentleman certainly snores in a truly loyal strain."

"That," said little M'Roarkin, "is liker the swine's melody, or the Bedfordshire hornpipe—he—he—he!"

"The poor gintleman's tired," observed Nancy, "after a hard day's thravelling."

"I daresay he is," said Father Ned, in the sincere hospitality of his country; "at all events take care of him, Nancy—he's a stranger, and get the best supper you can for him—he appears to be a truly respectable and well-bred man."

"I think," said M'Kinley, with a comical grin, "you might know that by his high-flown manner of sleeping—he snores very politely, and like a gintleman, all out."

"Well done, Alick," said the priest, laughing. "Go home, boys, it's near bedtime. Paddy, *ma bouchal*, are the horses ready?"

"They'll be at the door in a jiffey, your reverence," said Paddy, going out.

In the course of a few minutes he returned, exclaiming, "Why, thin, is it thinkin' to venthur out sich a night as it's comin' on, yer reverences would be? and it plashin' as if it came out of methers! Sure, the life would be dhrownded

out of both of ye, and yees might cotch a faver into the bargain."

"Sit down, gintlemen," said Ned; "sit down, Father Ned, you and Father Pether—we'll have another tumbler; and, as it's my turn to tell a story, I'll give yees something to amuse yees—the best I can, and, you all know, who can do more?"

"Very right, Ned; but let us see," replied Father Ned, putting his head out of the door, to ascertain what the night did. "Come, Pether, it's good to be on the safe side of any house in such a storm; we must only content ourselves till it gets fair. Now, Ned, go on with your story, and let it be as pleasant as possible."

"Never fear, your reverence," replied Ned; "here goes—and healths apiece to begin with."

THE THREE TASKS

OR, THE LITTLE HOUSE UNDER THE HILL

EVERY person in the parish knows the purty knoll that rises above the Routing Burn, some few miles from the renowned town of Knockimdowny, which, as all the world must allow, wants only houses and inhabitants to be as big a place as the great town of Dublin itself. At the foot of this little hill, just under the shelter of a dacent pebble of a rock, something about the bulk of half a dozen churches, one would be apt to see—if they knew how to look sharp, otherwise they mightn't be able to make it out from the grey rock above it, except by the smoke that ris from the chimbley — Nancy Magennis's little cabin, snug and cosy with its corrag,[1] or ould man of branches, standing on the windy side of the door, to keep away the blast.

"Upon my word, it was a dacent little residence in its own way, and so was Nancy herself, for that matther; for, though a poor *widdy,* she was very punctwell in paying for Jack's schooling, as I often heard ould Terry M'Phaudeen say, who tould me the story. Jack, indeed, grew up a fine slip; and, for hurling, football playing, and lepping, hadn't his likes in the five quarters of the parish. It's he that knew how to handle a spade and a raping-hook, and, what was betther nor all that, he was kind and tindher to his poor ould mother, and would let her want for nothing. Before he'd go to his day's work in the morning, he'd be sure to bring home from the clear spring-well that ran out of the other side of the rock, a pitcher of water to serve her for the day; nor would he forget to bring in a good creel of turf from the snug little peat-

[1] The *Corrag* is a roll of branches tied together with green, and used for the purposes mentioned in the story. It is six feet high, and much thicker than a sack, and is changed to either side of the door, according to the direction from which the wind blows.

stack that stood, thatched with rushes, before the door, and leave it in the corner, beside the fire; so that she had nothing to do but put over her hand, without rising off her sate, and put down a sod when she wanted it.

"Nancy, on her part, kept Jack very clane and comfortable: his linen, though coorse, was always a good colour; his working clothes tidily mended at all times; and when he'd have occasion to put on his good coat to work in for the first time, Nancy would sew on the forepart of each sleeve a stout patch of ould cloth, to keep them from being worn by the spade; so that when she'd rip these off them every Saturday night they would look as new and fresh as if he hadn't been working in them at all, at all.

"Then, when Jack came home in the winter nights, it would do your heart good to see Nancy sitting at her wheel, singing, 'Stachan Varagah,' or 'Peggy Na Laveen,' beside a purty clear fire, with a small pot of Murphys boiling on it for their supper, or laid up in a wooden dish, comfortably covered with a clane *praskeen*, on the well-swept hearthstone; whilst the quiet, dancing blaze might be seen blinking in the nice earthen plates and dishes that stood over against the side wall of the house. Just before the fire you might see Jack's stool waiting for him to come home; and, on the other side, the brown cat washing her face with her paws, or sitting beside the dog that lay asleep, quite happy and contínted, purring her song, and now and then looking over at Nancy, with her eyes half shut, as much as to say, 'Catch a happier pair nor we are, Nancy, if you can.'

"Sitting quietly on the roost above the door were Dickey the cock, and half a dozen hens, that kept this honest pair in eggs and *egg-milk* for the best part of the year—besides enabling Nancy to sell two or three clutches of March-birds every season, to help to buy wool for Jack's big coat and her own grey-beard gown and striped red and blue petticoat.

"To make a long story short, no two could be more comfortable, considering everything. But, indeed, Jack was always obsarved to have a dacent, ginteel turn with him: for he'd scorn to see a bad gown on his mother, or a broken Sunday coat on himself; and instead of drinking his little earning in a sheebeen house, and then eating his praties dry,

he'd take care to have something to kitchen[1] them; so that he was not only snug and dacent of a Sunday, regarding wearables, but so well fed and rosy that the point of a rush would take a drop of blood out of his cheek.[2] Then he was the comeliest and best-looking young man in the parish, could tell lots of droll stories, and sing scores of merry songs, that would make you split your sides with downright laughing; and when a wake or a dance would happen to be in the neighbourhood, maybe there wouldn't be many a sly look out from the purty girls for pleasant Jack Magennis.

"In this way lived Jack and his mother, as happy and contented as two lords; except now and then that Jack would feel a little consarn for not being able to lay past anything for the sore foot,[3] or that might enable him to think of marrying; for he was beginning to look about him for a wife—and why not, to be sure? But he was prudent, for all that, and didn't wish to bring a wife and small family into poverty and hardship without means to support them, as too many do.

"It was one fine frosty, moonlight night—the sky was without a cloud, and the stars all blinking that it would delight anybody's heart to look at them, when Jack was crassing a bog that lay a few fields beyant his own cabin. He was just crooning the 'Humours of Glin,' in to himself, and thinking that it was a very hard case that he couldn't save anything at all, at all, to help him to the wife—when, on coming down a bank in the middle of the bog, he saw a dark-looking man leaning against a clamp of turf, and a black dog, with a pipe of tobacky in his mouth, sitting at his ase beside him, and he smoking as sober as a judge. Jack, however, had a stout heart, bekase his conscience was clear, and, barring being a little daunted, he wasn't very much afeard. 'Who is this coming down toardst us?' said the black-favoured man, as he saw Jack approaching them. 'It's Jack Magennis,' says the dog, making answer, and taking the pipe out of his mouth with his right paw, and after puffing away

[1] Condiment or flavour.

[2] This proverb, which is always used as above, but without being confined in its application to only one sex, is a general one in Ireland. In delicacy and beauty I think it inimitable.

[3] Accidents—future calamity of any kind, or old age.

the smoke, and rubbing the end of it against his left leg, exactly as a Christian (this day's Friday, the Lord stand betune us and harm) would do against his sleeve, giving it at the same time to his comrade—'It's Jack Magennis,' says the dog, 'honest Widow Magennis's dacent son.' 'The very man,' says the other, back to him, 'that I'd wish to sarve, out of a thousand.—Arrah, Jack Magennis, how is every tether-length of you?' says the ould fellow, putting the *furrawn*[1] on him—'and how is every bone in your body, Jack, my darling? I'll hould a thousand guineas,' says he, pointing to a great big bag that lay beside him, 'and that's only the tenth part of what's in this bag, Jack, that you're just going to be in luck to-night, above all nights in the year!'

"'And may worse never happen you, Jack, *ma bouchal*,' says the dog, putting in his tongue, then wagging his tail, and houlding out his paw to shake hands with Jack.

"'Gintlemen,' says Jack, never minding to give the dog his hand, bekase he heard it wasn't safe to touch the likes of him—'Gintlemen,' says he, 'ye're sitting far from the fire this frosty night.'

"'Why, that's true, Jack,' answers the ould fellow; 'but if we're sitting far from the fire, we're sitting very near the makins of it, man alive.' So, with this, he pulls the bag of goold over to him, that Jack might know by the jingle of the shiners what was in it.

"'Jack,' says dark-face, 'there's some born with a silver ladle in their mouth, and others with a wooden spoon; and if you'll just sit down on the one end of this clamp with me, and take a hand at the "five-and-ten,"' pulling out, as he spoke, a deck of cards, 'you may be a made man for the remainder of your life.'

"'Sir,' says Jack, 'with submission, both yourself and this cur—I mane,' says he, not wishing to give the dog offence—'both yourself and this dacent gintleman with the tail and claws upon him, have the advantage of me, in respect of knowing my name; for, if I don't mistake,' says he, putting

[1] That frank, cordial manner of address which brings strangers suddenly to intimacy.

his hand to his *caubeen*, 'I never had the pleasure of seeing either of ye before.'

"'Never mind that,' says the dog, taking back the pipe from the other, and clapping it in his mouth; 'we're both your well-wishers, anyhow, and it's now your own fault if you're not a rich man.'

"Jack, by this time, was beginning to think that they might be afther wishing to throw luck in his way; for he had often heard of men being made up entirely by the fairies till there was no end to their wealth.

"'Jack,' says the black man, 'you had better be sed by us for this bout—upon the honour of a gintleman we wish you well. However, if you don't choose to take the ball at the right hop, another may, and you're welcome to toil all your life, and die a beggar afther.'

"'Upon my reputation, what he says is true, Jack,' says the dog, in his turn; 'the lucky minute of your life is come; let it pass without doing what them that wishes your mother's son well desire you, and you'll die in a ditch.'

"'And what am I to do,' says Jack, 'that's to make me so rich all of a sudden?'

"'Why, only to sit down and take a game of cards with myself,' says black-brow, 'that's all, and I'm sure it's not much.'

"'And what is it to be for?' Jack inquires, 'for I have no money—tare-nation to the rap itself's in my company.'

"'Well, you have yourself,' says the dog, putting up his fore-claw along his nose, and winking at Jack, 'you have yourself, man—don't be faint-hearted—he'll bet the contents of this bag;' and with that the ould thief gave it another great big shake, to make the guineas jingle again. 'It's ten thousand guineas in hard gould; if he wins, you're to sarve him for a year and a day; and if he loses, you're to have the bag.'

"'And the money that's in it,' says Jack, wishing, you see, to make a sure bargain, anyhow.

"'Ev'ry penny,' answered the ould chap, 'if you win it; and there's fifty to one in your favour.'

"By this time the dog had got into a great fit of laughing at Jack's sharpness about the money. 'The money that's in

it, Jack,' says he, and he took the pipe out of his mouth, and laughed till he brought on a hard fit of coughing; 'oh, by this and by that,' says he, 'but that bates Bannagher! and you're to get it ev'ry penny, you thief of the world, if you win it;' but for all that he seemed to be laughing at something that Jack wasn't up to.

"At any rate, surely, they palavered Jack betune them, until he sot down and consinted. 'Well,' says he, scratching his head, 'why, worse nor lose I can't, so here goes for one trial at the shiners, anyhow!'

"'Now,' says the obscure gintleman, just whin the first card was in his hand, ready to be laid down, 'you're to sarve me for a year and a day if I win; and if I lose, you shall have all the money in the bag.'

"'Exactly,' says Jack, and just as he said the word he saw the dog putting the pipe in his pocket, and turning his head away for fraid Jack would see him breaking his sides laughing. At last, when he got his face sobered, he looks at Jack, and says, 'Surely, Jack, if you win, you must get all the money in the bag; and, upon my reputation, you may build castles in the air with it, you'll be so rich.'

"This plucked up Jack's courage a little, and to work they went; but how could it end otherwise than Jack to lose betune two such knowing schemers as they soon turned out to be? For what do you think, but as Jack was beginning the game, the dog tips him a wink, laying his fore-claw along his nose, as before, as much as to say, 'Watch me, and you'll win'—turning round, at the same time, and showing Jack a nate little looking-glass that was set in his oxther, in which Jack saw, dark as it was, the spots of all the other fellow's cards, as he thought, so that he was cock sure of bating him. But they were a pair of downright knaves, anyhow; for Jack, by playing to the cards that he saw in the looking-glass, instead of to them the other held in his hand, lost the game and the money. In short, he saw that he was blarnied and chated by them both; and when the game was up he plainly tould them as much.

"'What, you scoundrel!' says the black fellow, starting up and catching him by the collar, 'dare you go for to impache my honour?'

"'Leather him if he says a word,' says the dog, running over on his hind legs, and laying his shut paw upon Jack's nose. 'Say another word, you rascal,' says he, 'and I'll down you;' with this the ould fellow gives him another shake.

"'I don't blame you so much,' says Jack to him, 'it was the looking-glass that desaved me; that cur's nothing but a blackleg.'

"'What looking-glass, you knave you?' says dark-face, giving him a fresh haul.

"'Why, the one I saw under the dog's oxther,' replied Jack.

"'Under my oxther! you swindling rascal,' replied the dog, giving him a pull by the other side of the collar; 'did ever any honest pair of gintlemen hear the like?—but he only wants to break through the agreement; so let us turn him at once into an ass, and then he'll break no more bargains, nor strive to take in honest men and win their money. Me a blackleg!' So saying, the dark fellow drew his two hands over Jack's jaws, and in a twinkling there was a pair of ass's ears growing up out of his head. When Jack found this, he knew that he wasn't in good hands; so he thought it best to get himself as well out of the scrape as possible.

"'Gintlemen, be aisy,' says he, 'and let us understand one another. I'm very willing to sarve you for a year and a day, but I've one request to ax, and it's this: I've a helpless ould mother at home, and if I go with you now she'll break her heart with grief first, and starve afterwards. Now, if your honour will give me a year to work hard, and lay in provision to support her while I'm away, I'll serve you with all the veins of my heart—for a bargain's a bargain.'

"With this the dog gave his companion a pluck by the skirt, and, after some chat together, that Jack didn't hear, they came back and said they would comply with his wishes that far; 'so, on to-morrow twelvemonth, Jack,' says the dark fellow, 'the dog here will come to your mother's, and if you follow him he'll bring you safe to my castle.'

"'Very well, your honour,' says Jack; 'but as dogs resemble one another so much, how will I know him whin he comes?'

"'Why,' answers the other, 'he'll have a green ribbon about his neck, and a pair of Wellington boots on his hind legs.'

"'That's enough, sir,' says Jack, 'I can't mistake him in

that dress, so I'll be ready; but gintlemen, if it would be plasing to you both, I'd every bit as soon not go home with these,' and he handled the brave pair of ears he had got, as he spoke. 'The truth is, gintlemen, I'm deluding enough without them; and as I'm so modest, you persave, why, if you'd take them away you'd oblige me!'

"To this they had no objection, and during that year Jack wrought night and day, that he might be able to lave as much provision with his poor mother as would support her in his absence; and when the morning came that he was to bid her farewell he went down on his two knees and got her blessing. He then left her with tears in his eyes, and promised to come back the very minute his time would be up. 'Mother,' says he, 'be kind to your little family here, and feed them well, as they are all you'll have to keep you company till you see me again.'

"His mother then stuffed his pockets with bread, till they stuck out behind him, and gave him a crooked sixpence for luck; after which he got his staff, and was just ready to tramp, when, sure enough, he spies his ould friend the dog, with the green ribbon about his neck, and the Wellington boots upon his hind legs. He didn't go in, but waited on the outside till Jack came out. They then set off, but no one knows how far they travelled, till they reached the dark gintleman's castle, who appeared very glad to see Jack, and gave him a hearty welcome.

"The next day, in consequence of his long journey, he was ax'd to do nothing; but in the coorse of the evening the dark chap brought him into a long, frightful room, where there were three hundred and sixty-five hooks sticking out of the wall, and on every hook but one a man's head. When Jack saw this agreeable sight, his dinner began to quake within him; but he felt himself still worse when his master pointed to the empty hook, saying, 'Now, Jack, your business to-morrow is to clane out a stable that wasn't claned for the last seven years, and if you don't have it finished before dusk —do you see that hook?'

"'Ye—yes,' replied Jack, hardly able to spake. 'Well, if you don't have it finished before dusk your head will be hanging on that hook as soon as the sun sets.'

"'Very well, your honour,' replied Jack, scarcely knowing what he said, or he wouldn't have said 'very well' to such a bloody-minded intention, anyhow — 'Very well,' says he, 'I'll do my best, and all the world knows that the best can do no more.'

"Whilst this discourse was passing betune them, Jack happened to look at the upper end of the room, and there he saw one of the beautifullest faces that ever was seen on a woman, looking at him through a little panel that was in the wall. She had a white, snowy forehead—such eyes, and cheeks, and teeth, that there's no coming up to them; and the clusters of dark hair that hung about her beautiful temples!—by the laws, I'm afeard of falling in love with her myself, so I'll say no more about her, only that she would charm the heart of a wheel-barrow. At any rate, in spite of all the ould fellow could say — heads, and hooks, and all, Jack couldn't help throwing an eye now and then to the panel; and to tell the truth, if he had been born to riches and honour, it would be hard to fellow him for a good face and a good figure.

"'Now, Jack,' said his master, 'go and get your supper, and I hope you'll be able to perform your task—if not, off goes your head.'

"'Very well, your honour,' says Jack, again scratching it in the hoith of perplexity, 'I must only do what I can.'

"The next morning Jack was up with the sun, if not before him, and hard at his task; but before breakfast-time he lost all heart, and little wonder he should, poor fellow, bekase, for every one shovelful he'd throw out, there would come three more in: so that instead of making his task less, according as he got on, it became greater. He was now in the greatest dilemmy, and didn't know how to manage, so he was driven at last to such an amplush, that he had no other shift for employment, only to sing 'Paudeen O'Rafferty' out of mere vexation, and dance the hornpipe trebling step to it, cracking his fingers, half mad, through the stable. Just in the middle of this tantrum, who comes to the dour to call him to his breakfast but the beautiful crathur he saw the evening before peeping at him through the panel. At this minute Jack had so hated himself by the dancing that his handsome face was in a fine glow entirely.

"'I think,' said she to Jack, with one of her own sweet smiles, 'that this is an odd way of performing your task.'

"'Och, thin, 'tis you that may say that,' replies Jack; 'but it's myself that's willing to have my head hung up any day, just for one sight of you, you darling.'

"'Where did you come from?' asked the lady, with another smile that bate the first all to nothing.

"'Where did I come from, is it?' answered Jack; 'why, death-alive! did you never hear of ould Ireland, my jewel? —hem—I mane, plase your ladyship's honour.'

"'No,' she answered; 'where is that country?'

"'Och, by the honour of an Irishman,' says Jack, 'that takes the shine!—not heard of Erin—the Imerald Isle—the Jim of the ocean, where all the men are brave and honourable, and all the women—hem—I mane the ladies—chaste and beautiful?'

"'No,' said she; 'not a word: but if I stay longer I may get you into blame—come into your breakfast, and I'm sorry to find that you have done so little at your task. Your master's a man that always acts up to what he threatens; and, if you have not this stable cleared out before dusk, your head will be taken off your shoulders this night.'

"'Why, thin,' says Jack, 'my beautiful darl—plase your honour's ladyship—if he hangs it up, will you do me the favour, *acushla machree*, to turn my head toardst that same panel where I saw a sartin fair face that I won't mintion; and if you do, let me alone for watching a sartin purty face I'm acquainted with.'

"'What means *cushla machree?*' inquired the lady, as she turned to go away.

"'It manes that you're the pulse of my heart, *avourneen*, plase your ladyship's reverence,' says Jack.

"'Well,' said the lovely crathur, 'any time you speak to me in future, I would rather you would omit terms of honour, and just call me after the manner of your own country; instead, for instance, of calling me your ladyship, I would be better pleased if you called me *cushla*—something'——

"'*Cushla machree, ma vourneen*—the pulse of my heart—my darling,' said Jack, consthering it (the thief) for her, for fraid she wouldn't know it well enough.

"'Yes,' she replied, '*cushla machree;* well, as I can pronounce it, *acushla machree,* will you come into your breakfast?' said the darling, giving Jack a smile that would be enough, any day, to do up the heart of an Irishman. Jack accordingly went after her, thinking of nothing except herself; but on going in he could see no sign of her, so he sat down to his breakfast, though a single ounce, barring a couple of pounds of beef, the poor fellow couldn't ate at that bout for thinking of her.

"Well, he went again to his work, and thought he'd have better luck; but it was still the ould game—three shovelfuls would come in for ev'ry one he'd throw out; and now he began, in earnest, to feel something about his heart that he didn't like, bekase he couldn't, for the life of him, help thinking of the three hundred and sixty-four heads and the empty hook. At last he gave up the work entirely, and took it into his head to make himself scarce from about the ould fellow's castle altogether; and without more to do he set off, never saying as much as 'good-bye' to his master; but he hadn't got as far as the lower end of the yard when his ould friend, the dog, steps out of a kennel, and meets him full butt in the teeth.

"'So, Jack,' says he, 'you're going to give us leg bail, I see; but walk back with yourself, you *spalpeen,* this minute, and join your work, or if you don't,' says he, 'it will be worse for your health. I'm not so much your enemy now as I was, bekase you have a friend in coort that you know nothing about; so just do whatever you are bid, and keep never minding.'

"Jack went back with a heavy heart, as you may be sure, knowing that whenever the black cur began to blarney him there was no good to come in his way. He accordingly went into the stable, but consuming to the hand's turn he did, knowing it would be only useless; for, instead of clearing it out, he'd be only filling it.

"It was now near dinner-time, and Jack was very sad and sorrowful—as how could he be otherwise, poor fellow, with such a bloody-minded ould chap to dale with?—when up comes the darling of the world again to call him to his dinner.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, with her white arms so beautiful, and her dark clusters tossed about by the motion of the walk, 'how are you coming on at your task?'

"'How am I coming on, is it? Och, thin,' says Jack, giving a good-humoured smile through the frown that was on his face, 'plase your lady—*acushla machree*—it's all over with me; for I've still the same story to tell, and off goes my head, as sure as it's on my shoulders, this blessed night.'

"'That would be a pity, Jack,' says she, 'for there are worse heads on worse shoulders; but will you give me the shovel?'

"'Will I give *you* the shovel, is it? Och, thin, wouldn't I be a right big baste to do the likes of that, anyhow?' says Jack. 'What! *avourneen dheelish!* to stand up with myself, and let this hard shovel into them beautiful, soft, white hands of your own! Faix, my jewel, if you knew but all, my mother's son's not the man to do such a disgraceful turn as to let a lady like you take the shovel out of his hand, and he standing with his mouth under his nose looking at you—not myself, *avourneen!* we have no such ungenteel manners as that in our country.'

"'Take my advice, Jack,' says she, pleased in her heart at what Jack said, for all she didn't purtend it—'give me the shovel, and, depend upon it, I'll do more in a short time to clear the stable than you would for years.'

"'Why, thin, *avourneen,* it goes to my heart to refuse you; but, for all that, may I never see yesterday if a taste of it will go into your purty white fingers,' says the thief, praising her to her face all the time; 'my head may go off any day, and welcome, but death before dishonour. Say no more, darling; but tell your father I'll be in to my dinner immediately.'

"Notwithstanding all this, by jingo the lady would not be put off. Like a ra-al woman, she'd have her way. So, on telling Jack that she didn't intend to work with the shovel at all, at all, but only to take it for a minute in her hand, at long last he gave it to her. She then struck it three times on the threshel of the door, and, giving it back into his hand, tould him to try what he could do. Well, sure enough, now there was a change; for instead of three shovelfuls coming in, as before, when he threw one out, there went nine more along with it. Jack, in coorse, couldn't do less than thank

the lovely crathur for her assistance; but when he raised his head to speak to her she was gone. I needn't say, howsomever, that he went in to his dinner with a light heart and a murdhering appetite; and when the ould fellow axed him how he was coming on, Jack tould him that he was doing gloriously. 'Remember the empty hook, Jack,' said he. 'Never fear, your honour,' answered Jack; 'if I don't finish my task, you may bob my head off any time.'

"Jack now went out, and was a short time getting through his job, for before the sun set it was finished; and he came into the kitchen, ate his supper, and, sitting down before the fire, sung 'Love among the Roses' and the 'Black Joke,' to vex the ould fellow.

"This was one task over, and his head was safe for that bout; but that night, before he went to bed, his master called him upstairs, brought him into the bloody room, and gave him his orders for the next day. 'Jack,' says he, 'I have a wild filly that has never been caught, and you must go to my demesne to-morrow and catch her, or if you don't—look there,' says the big blackguard, 'on that hook it hangs before to-morrow if you haven't her before sunset in the stable that you claned yesterday.' 'Very well, your honour,' says Jack carelessly; 'I'll do everything in my power, and if I fail I can't help it.'

"The next morning Jack was out with a bridle in his hand, going to catch the filly. As soon as he got into the demesne, sure enough, there she was in the middle of a green field, grazing quite at her ase. When Jack saw this he went over towards her, houlding out his hat, as if it was full of oats; but he kept the hand that had the bridle in it behind his back, for fraid she'd see it and make off. Well, my dear, on he went till he was almost within grip of her, cock sure that he had nothing more to do than slip the bridle over her neck and secure her; but he made a bit of a mistake in his reckoning, for though she smelt and smoked about him, just as if she didn't care a feed of oats whether he caught her or not, yet when he boulted over to hould her fast, she was off like a shot, with her tail cocked, to the far end of the demesne, and Jack had to set off hot foot after her. All, however, was to no purpose; he couldn't come next or near her for the rest

of the day, and there she kept coorsing about him, from one field to another, till he hadn't a blast of breath in his body.

"In this state was Jack when the beautiful crathur came out to call him home to his breakfast, walking, with the pretty small feet and light steps of her own, upon the green fields, so bright and beautiful, scarcely bending the grass and flowers as she went along, the darling.

"'Jack,' says she, 'I fear you have as difficult a task to-day as you had yesterday.'

"'Why, and it's you that may say that with your own purty mouth,' says Jack, says he; for out of breath and all as he was, he couldn't help giving her a bit of blarney, the rogue.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, 'take my advice, and don't tire yourself any longer by attempting to catch her; truth's best —I tell you, you could never do it. Come home to your breakfast, and when you return again, just amuse yourself as well as you can until dinner time.'

"'Och, och!' says Jack, striving to look, the sly thief, as if she had promised to help him—'I only wish I was a king, and, by the powers, I know who would be my queen, anyhow; for it's your own sweet lady—*savourneen dheelish.* I say, amn't I bound to you for a year and a day longer, for promising to give me a lift, as well as for what you done yesterday?'

"'Take care, Jack,' says she, smiling, however, at his ingenuity in striving to trap her into a promise; 'I don't think I made any promise of assistance.'

"'You didn't?' says Jack, wiping his face with the skirt of his coat; 'cause why?—you see pocket-handkerchiefs weren't invented in them times. 'Why, thin, may I never live to see yesterday, if there's not as much rale beauty in that smile that's divarting itself about them sweet breathing lips of yours and in them two eyes of light that's breaking both their hearts laughing at me this minute, as would encourage any poor fellow to expect a good turn from you—that is, whin you could do it without hurting or harming yourself; for it's he would be the right rascal that could take it if it would injure a silken hair of your head.'

"'Well,' said the lady, with another roguish smile, 'I shall call you home to your dinner, at all events.'

"When Jack went back from his breakfast he didn't slave himself after the filly any more, but walked about to view the demesne, and the avenues, and the green walks, and nice temples, and fish-ponds and rookeries, and everything, in short, that was worth seeing. Towards dinner-time, however, he began to have an eye to the way the sweet crathur was to come, and sure enough it's she that wasn't one minute late.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, 'I'll keep you no longer in doubt,' for the tender-hearted crathur saw that Jack, although he didn't wish to let an to her, was fretting every now and then about the odd hook and the bloody room—'So, Jack,' says she, 'although I didn't promise, yet I'll perform;' and with that she pulled a small ivory whistle out of her pocket, and gave three blasts on it that brought the wild filly up to her very hand, as quick as the wind. She then took the bridle, and threw it over the baste's neck, giving her up, at the same time, to Jack. 'You needn't fear now, Jack,' says she; 'you will find her as quiet as a lamb, and as tame as you wish: as a proof of it, just walk before her, and you will see she will follow you to any part of the field.'

"Jack, you may be sure, paid her as many and as sweet eompliments as he eould, and never heed one from his country for being able to say something toothsome to the ladies. At any rate, if he laid it on thick the day before, he gave her two or three additional coats this time, and the innocent soul went away smiling, as usual.

"When Jack brought the filly home, the dark fellow, his master, if dark before, was a perfeet tundher-eloud this night: bedad, he was nothing less than near bursting with vexation, bekase the thieving ould sinner intended to have Jack's head upon the hook; but he fell short in his reckoning now as well as before. Jack sung 'Love among the Roses' and the 'Black Joke,' to help him into better timper.

"'Jack,' says he, striving to make himself speak pleasant to him, 'you've got two difficult tasks over you; but you know the third time's the charm—take care of the next.'

"'No matter about that,' says Jack, speaking up to him stiff and stout, bekase, as the dog tould him, he knew he had a friend in coort; 'let's hear what it is, anyhow.'

"'To-morrow, then,' says the other, 'you're to rob a erane's

nest on the top of a beech tree which grows in the middle of a little island in the lake that you saw, yesterday, in my demesne; you're to have neither boat, nor oar, nor any kind of conveyance, but just as you stand; and if you fail to bring me the eggs, or if you break one of them—look here!' says he, again pointing to the odd hook, for all this discourse took place in the bloody room.

"'Good again,' says Jack; 'if I fail, I know my doom.'

"'No, you don't, you *spalpeen*,' says the other, getting vexed with him entirely; 'for I'll roast you till you're half dead, and ate my dinner off you after; and, what is more than that, you blackguard, you must sing the "Black Joke" all the time for my amusement.'

"'Div'l fly away with you,' thought Jack, 'but you're fond of music, you vagabond.'

"The next morning Jack was going round and round the lake, trying about the edge of it if he could find any place shallow enough to wade in; but he might as well go to wade the say, and, what was worse of all, if he attempted to swim, it would be like a tailor's goose—straight to the bottom; so he kept himself safe on dry land, still expecting a visit from the 'lovely crathur,' but, bedad, his good luck failed him for wanst; for, instead of seeing her coming over to him, so mild and sweet, who does he obsarve steering, at a dog's trot, but his ould friend the smoking cur. 'Confusion to that cur,' says Jack to himself; 'I know now there's some bad fortune before me, or he wouldn't be coming acrass me.'

"'Come home to your breakfast, Jack,' says the dog, walking up to him; 'it's breakfast-time.'

"'Ay,' says Jack, scratching his head; 'it's no great matter whether I do or not, for I bleeve my head's hardly worth a flat-dutch cabbage at the present speaking.'

"'Why, man, it was never worth so much,' says the baste, pulling out his pipe and putting it in his mouth, when it lit at once.

"'Take care of yourself,' says Jack, quite desperate—for he thought he was near the end of his tether—'take care of yourself, you dirty cur, or maybe I might take a gintleman's toe from the nape of your neck.'

"'You had better keep a straight tongue in your head,'

says four legs, 'while it's on your shoulders, or I'll break every bone in your skin. Jack, you're a fool,' says he, checking himself, and speaking kindly to him—'you're a fool; didn't I tell you the other day to do what you were bid, and keep never minding?'

"'Well,' thought Jack to himself, 'there's no use in making him any more my enemy than he is—particularly as I'm in such a hobble.'

"'You lie,' says the dog, as if Jack had spoken out to him, wherein he only thought the words to himself—'You lie,' says he; 'I'm not, nor never was, your enemy, if you knew but all.'

"'I beg your honour's pardon,' answers Jack, 'for being so smart with your honour; but, bedad, if you were in my case—if you expected your master to roast you alive—eat his dinner off your body—make you sing the "Black Joke" by way of music for him; and, to crown all, knew that your head was to be stuck upon a hook after—maybe you would be a little short in your temper as well as your neighbours.'

"'Take heart, Jack,' says the other, laying his fore-claw as knowingly as ever along his nose, and winking slyly at Jack; 'didn't I tell you that you have a friend in coort? The day's not past yet; so cheer up; who knows but there is luck before you still?'

"'Why, thin,' says Jack, getting a little cheerful, and wishing to crack a joke with him, 'but your honour's very fond of the pipe!'

"'Oh! don't you know, Jack,' says he, 'that that's the fashion at present among my tribe: sure, all my brother puppies smoke now, and a man might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion, you know.'

"When they drew near home they got quite thick entirely. 'Now,' says Jack, in a good-humoured way, 'if you can give me a lift in robbing this crane's nest, do; at any rate, I'm sure your honour won't be my enemy. I know you have too much good nature in your face to be one that wouldn't help a lame dog over a stile—that is,' says he, taking himself up for fear of offending the other, 'I'm sure you'd be always inclined to help the weak side.'

"'Thank you for the compliment,' says the dog; 'but didn't I tell you that you have a friend in coort?'

"When Jack went back to the lake, he could only sit and look sorrowfully at the tree, or walk about the edge of it, without being able to do anything else. He spent the whole day this-a-way till dinner-time, when what would you have of it but he sees the 'darling' coming out to him, as fair and as blooming as an angel. His heart, you may be sure, got up to his mouth, for he knew she would be apt to take him out of his difficulties. When she came up—

"'Now, Jack,' says she, 'there is not a minute to be lost, for I'm watched; and if it's discovered that I gave you any assistance we will be both destroyed.'

"'Oh, murther, *sheery!*' says Jack, 'fly back, *avourneen machree;* for, rather than anything should happen you, I'd lose fifty lives.'

"'No,' says she; 'I think I'll be able to get you over this, as well as the rest; so have a good heart and be faithful.'

"'That's it,' replied Jack—'that's it, *acushla*—my own correcthur to a shaving; I've a heart worth its weight in bank-notes, and a more faithful boy isn't alive this day nor I am to yees all, ye darlings of the world.'

"She then pulled a small white wand out of her pocket, struck the lake, and there was the prettiest green ridge across it to the foot of the tree that ever eye beheld. 'Now,' says she, turning her back to Jack, and stooping down to do something that he couldn't see, 'take these, put them against the tree, and you will have steps to carry you to the top; but be sure, for your life and mine, not to forget any of them; if you do, my life will be taken to-morrow morning, for your master puts on my slippers with his own hands.'

"Jack was now going to swear that he would give up the whole thing, and surrender his head at once; but when he looked at her feet and saw no appearance of blood, he went over without more to do, and robbed the nest, taking down the eggs one by one, that he mightn't break them. There was no end to his joy as he secured the last egg. He instantly took down the toes, one after another, save and except the little one of the left foot, which, in his joy and hurry, he forgot entirely. He then returned by the green ridge to the shore, and according as he went along it melted away into the water behind him.

"'Jack,' says the charmer, 'I hope you forgot none of my toes.'

"'Is it me?' says Jack, quite sure that he had them all. 'Arrah, catch any one from my country makin' a blunder of that kind.'

"'Well,' says she, 'let us see.' So, taking the toes, she placed them on again, just as if they had never been off. But, lo and behold! on coming to the last of the left foot, it wasn't forthcoming. 'O Jack, Jack!' says she, 'you have destroyed me; to-morrow morning your master will notice the want of this toe, and that instant I'll be put to death.'

"'Lave that to me,' says Jack; 'by the powers, you won't lose a drop of your darling blood for it. Have you got a penknife about you? and I'll soon show you how you won't.'

"'What do you want with the knife?' she inquired.

"'What do I want with it?—why, to give you the best toe on both my feet, for the one I lost on you. Do you think I'd suffer you to want a toe, and I have ten thumping ones at your sarvice!—I'm not the man, you beauty, you, for such a shabby trick as that comes to.'

"'But you forget,' says the lady, who was a little cooler than Jack, 'that none of yours would fit me.'

"'And must you die to-morrow, *acushla?*' asked Jack, in desperation.

"'As sure as the sun rises,' answered the lady; 'for your master would know at once that it was by my toes the nest was robbed.'

"'By the powers,' observed Jack, 'he's one of the greatest ould vag—I mane, isn't he a terrible man, out and out, for a father?'

"'Father!' says the darling—'he's not my father, Jack; he only wishes to marry me, and if I'm not able to outdo him before three days more, it's decreed that he must have me.'

"When Jack heard this, surely the Irishman must come out; there he stood, and began to wipe his eyes with the skirt of his coat, making as if he was crying, the thief of the world.

"'What's the matter with you?' she asked.

"'Ah!' says Jack, 'you darling, I couldn't find in my heart to desave you: for I have no way at home to keep a lady like you, in proper style, at all, at all; I would only

bring you into poverty; and since you wish to know what ails me, I'm vexed that I'm not rich for your sake, and next, that that thieving ould villain's to have you; and, by the powers, I'm crying for both these misfortunes together.'

"The lady couldn't help being touched and plaised with Jack's tinderness and ginerosity; so, says she, 'Don't be cast down, Jack; come or go what will, I won't marry him—I'd die first. Do you go home, as usual; but take care and don't sleep at all this night. Saddle the wild filly—meet me under the whitethorn bush at the end of the lawn, and we'll both leave him for ever. If you're willing to marry me, don't let poverty distress you, for I have more money than we'll know what to do with.'

"Jack's voice now began to tremble in earnest, with downright love and tinderness, as good right it had; so he promised to do everything just as she bid him, and then went home with a dacent appetite enough to his supper.

"You may be sure the ould fellow looked darker and grimmer than ever at Jack; but what could he do? Jack had done his duty; so he sat before the fire, and sung 'Love among the Roses' and the 'Black Joke,' with a stouter and lighter heart than ever, while the black chap could have seen him skivered.

"When midnight came, Jack, who kept a hawk's eye to the night, was at the hawthorn with the wild filly, saddled and all—more betoken, she wasn't a bit wild then, but as tame as a dog. Off they set, like *Erin-go-bragh*, Jack and the lady, and never pulled bridle till it was one o'clock next day, when they stopped at an inn and had some refreshment. They then took the road again, full speed; however, they hadn't gone far, when they heard a great noise behind them, and the tramp of horses galloping like mad. 'Jack,' says the darling, on hearing the hubbub, 'look behind you, and see what's this.'

"'Och! by the elevens,' says Jack, 'we're done at last; it's the dark fellow, and half the country, after us.'

"'Put your hand,' says she, 'in the filly's right ear, and tell me what you find in it.'

"'Nothing at all, at all,' says Jack, 'but a *wheeshy* bit of a dry stick.'

"'Throw it over your left shoulder,' says she, 'and see what will happen.'

"Jack did so at once, and there was a great grove of thick trees growing so close to one another that a dandy could scarcely get his arm betwixt them.

"'Now,' said she, 'we are safe for another day.'

"'Well,' said Jack, as he pushed on the filly, 'you're the jewel of the world, sure enough; and maybe it's you that won't live happy when we get to the Jim of the Ocean.'

"As soon as the dark-face saw what happened, he was obliged to scour the country for hatchets and hand-saws, and all kinds of sharp instruments, to hew himself and his men a passage through the grove. As the saying goes, many hands make light work, and, sure enough, it wasn't long till they had cleared a way for themselves, thick as it was, and set off with double speed after Jack and the lady.

"The next day, about one o'clock, he and she were after taking another small refreshment of roast-beef and porther, and pushing on, as before, when they heard the same tramping behind them, only it was ten times louder.

"'Here they are again,' says Jack; 'and I'm afeard they'll come up with us at last.'

"'If they do,' says she, 'they'll put us to death on the spot; but we must try somehow to stop them another day, if we can: search the filly's right ear again, and let me know what you find in it.'

"Jack pulled out a little three-cornered pebble, telling her that it was all he got.

"'Well,' says she, 'throw it over your left shoulder like the stick.'

"No sooner said than done; and there was a great chain of high, sharp rocks in the way of divil-face and all his clan. 'Now,' says she, 'we have gained another day.'

"'Tundher-and-turf!' says Jack, 'what's this for, at all, at all?—but wait till I get you in the Imerald Isle, for this, and if you don't enjoy happy days anyhow, why, I'm not sitting before you on this horse, by the same token that it's not a horse at all, but a filly though: if you don't get the hoith of good aiting and drinking—lashings of the best wine and whisky that the land can afford, my name's not Jack. We'll build a castle, and

you'll have upstairs and downstairs—a coach and six to ride in—lots of servants to attend on you, and full and plinty of everything; not to mintion—hem!—not to mintion that you'll have a husband that the fairest lady in the land might be proud of,' says he, stretching himself up in the saddle, and giving the filly a jag of the spurs, to show off a bit; although the coaxing rogue knew that the money which was to do all this was her own. At any rate, they spent the remainder of this day pleasantly enough, still moving on, though, as fast as they could. Jack, every now and then, would throw an eye behind, as if to watch their pursuers, wherein, if the truth was known, it was to get a peep at the beautiful glowing face and warm lips that were breathing all kinds of *fraagrancies* about him. I'll warrant he didn't envy the King upon his throne when he felt the honeysuckle of her breath, like the smell of Father Ned's orchard there of a May morning.

"When Fardorougha[1] found the great chain of rocks before him, you may set it down that he was likely to blow up with vexation; but, for all that, the first thing he blew up was the rocks; and that he might lose little or no time in doing it, he collected all the gunpowder and crowbars, spades and pickaxes, that could be found for miles about him, and set to it, working as if it was with inch of candle. For half a day there was nothing but boring and splitting, and driving of iron wedges, and blowing up pieces of rocks as big as little houses, until, by hard labour, they made a passage for themselves sufficient to carry them over. They then set off again, full speed; and great advantage they had over the poor filly that Jack and the lady rode on, for their horses were well rested, and hadn't to carry double, like Jack's. The next day they spied Jack and his beautiful companion just about a quarter of a mile before them.

"'Now,' says dark-brow, 'I'll make any man's fortune for ever that will bring me them two, either living or dead, but, if possible, alive; so, spur on, for whoever secures them is a made man—but, above all things, make no noise.'

"It was now divil take the hindmost among the bloody pack—every spur was red with blood, and every horse

[1] The dark man.

smoking. Jack and the lady were jogging on acrass a green field, not suspecting that the rest were so near them, and talking over the pleasant days they would spind together in Ireland, when they hears the hue-and-cry once more at their very heels.

"'Quick as lightning, Jack,' says she, 'or we're lost—the right ear and the left shoulder, like thought—they're not three lengths of the filly from us!'

"But Jack knew his business; for just as a long, grim-looking villain, with a great rusty rapier in his hand, was within a single leap of them, and quite sure of either killing or making prisoners of them both, Jack flings a little drop of green water, that he got in the filly's ear, over his left shoulder, and in an instant there was a deep, dark gulf, filled with black, pitchy-looking water, between them. The lady now desired Jack to pull up the filly a bit, till they would see what would become of the dark fellow; but, just as they turned round, the ould nager set spurs to his horse, and, in a fit of desperation, plunged himself, horse and all, into the gulf, and was never seen or heard of more. The rest that were with him went home, and began to quarrel about his wealth, and kept murdering and killing one another, until a single vagabond of them wasn't left alive to enjoy it.

"When Jack saw what happened, and that the bloodthirsty ould villain got what he desarved so richly, he was as happy as a prince, and ten times happier than most of them as the world goes, and she was every bit as delighted. 'We have nothing more to fear,' said the darling that put them all down so cleverly, seeing she was but a woman; but, bedad, it's she was the right sort of a woman: 'all our dangers are now over—at least, all yours are; regarding myself,' says she, 'there is a trial before me yet, and that trial, Jack, depends upon your faithfulness and constancy.'

"'On me, is it? Och, then, murder! isn't it a poor case entirely, that I have no way of showing you that you may depend your life upon me, only by telling you so?'

"'I do depend upon you,' says she—'and now, as you love me, do not, when the trial comes, forget her that saved you out of so many troubles, and made you such a great and wealthy man.'

"The foregoing part of this Jack could well understand; but the last part of it, making collusion to the wealth, was a little dark, he thought, bekase he hadn't fingered any of it at that time; still, he knew she was truth to the backbone, and wouldn't desave him. They hadn't travelled much farther, when Jack snaps his fingers, with a 'Whoo! by the powers, there it is, my darling—there it is, at long last!'

"'There is what, Jack?' said she, surprised, as well she might, at his mirth and happiness—'There is what?' says she.

"'Cheer up,' says Jack; 'there it is, my darling—the Shannon!—as soon as we get to the other side of it we'll be in ould Ireland once more.'

"There was no end to Jack's good-humour when he crossed the Shannon; and she was not a bit displased to see him so happy. They had now no enemies to fear, were in a civilised country, and among green fields and well-bred people. In this way they travelled at their ase, till they came within a few miles of the town of Knockimdowny, near which Jack's mother lived.

"'Now, Jack,' says she, 'I tould you that I would make you rich. You know the rock beside your mother's cabin; in the east end of that rock there is a loose stone, covered over with grey moss, just two feet below the cleft out of which the hanging rowan tree grows—pull that stone out, and you will find more goold than would make a duke. Neither speak to any person, nor let any living thing touch your lips till you come back to me, or you'll forget that you ever saw me, and I'll be left poor and friendless in a strange country.'

"'Why, thin, *manim asthee hu*,' says Jack, 'but the best way to guard against that, is to touch your own sweet lips at the present time,' says he, giving her a smack that you'd hear, of a calm evening, acrass a couple of fields. Jack set off to touch the money with such speed that when he fell he scarcely waited to rise again; he was soon at the rock, anyhow, and, without either doubt or disparagement, there was a cleft of ra-al goolden guineas, as fresh as daisies. The first thing he did, after he had filled his pockets with them, was to look if his mother's cabin was to the fore; and there surely it was, as snug as ever, with the same dacent column of smoke rowling from the chimbley.

"'Well,' thought he, 'I'll just stale over to the door-cheek, and peep in to get one sight of my poor mother; then I'll throw her in a handful of these guineas, and take to my scrapers.'

"Accordingly, he stole up at a half-bend to the door, and was just going to take a peep in, when out comes the little dog Trig, and begins to leap and fawn upon him, as if it would eat him. The mother, too, came running out to see what was the matter, when the dog made another spring up about Jack's neck, and gave his lips the slightest lick in the world with its tongue, the crathur was so glad to see him: the next minute Jack forgot the lady as clane as if he had never seen her; but, if he forgot her, catch him at forgetting the money—not he, *avick!*—that stuck to him like pitch.

"When the mother saw who it was, she flew to him, and, clasping her arms about his neck, hugged him till she wasn't worth three half-pence. After Jack sot a while, he made a trial to let her know what had happened him, but he disremembered it all, except having the money in the rock, so he up and tould her that, and a glad woman she was to hear of his good fortune. Still, he kept the place where the goold was to himself, having been often forbid by her ever to trust a woman with a sacret when he could avoid it.

"Now, everybody knows what changes the money makes, and Jack was no exception to this ould saying. In a few years he had built himself a fine castle, with three hundred and sixty-four windies in it, and he would have added another, to make one for every day in the year, only that that would be equal to the number in the King's palace, and the Lord of the Black Rod would be sent to take his head off, it being high thrason for a subject to have as many windies in his house as the King. However, Jack, at any rate, had enough of them; and he that couldn't be happy with three hundred and sixty-four wouldn't desarve to have three hundred and sixty-five. Along with all this, he bought coaches and carriages, and didn't get proud, like many other beggarly upstarts, but took especial good care of his mother, whom he dressed in silks and satins, and gave her nice nourishing food that was fit for an ould woman in her condition. He also got great teachers, men of deep larning, from Dublin,

acquainted with all subjects; and, as his own abilities were bright, he soon became a very great scholar entirely, and was able, in the long-run, to outdo all his tutherers.

"In this way he lived for some years—was now a man of great larning himself—could spake the seven langwidges, and it would delight your ears to hear how high-flown and Englified he could talk. All the world wondered where he got his wealth; but, as he was kind and charitable to every one that stood in need of assistance, the people said that, wherever he got it, it couldn't be in better hands. At last he began to look about him for a wife, and the only one in that part of the country that would be at all fit for him was the Honourable Miss Bandbox, the daughter of a nobleman in the neighbourhood. She, indeed, flogged all the world for beauty; but it was said that she was proud and fond of wealth, though, God He knows, she had enough of that, anyhow. Jack, however, saw none of this; for she was cunning enough to smile, and simper, and look pleasant, whenever he'd come to her father's. Well, begad, from one thing and one word to another, Jack thought it was best to make up to her at wanst, and try if she'd accept of him for a husband; accordingly, he put the word to her, like a man, and she, making as if she was blushing, put her fan before her face and made no answer. Jack, however, wasn't to be daunted; for he knew two things worth knowing when a man goes to look for a wife: the first is—that 'faint heart never won fair lady;' and the second—that 'silence gives consint.' He therefore spoke up to her in fine English, for it's he that knew how to speak now, and, after a little more fanning and blushing, by jingo, she consinted. Jack then broke the matter to her father, who was as fond of money as the daughter, and only wanted to grab at him for the wealth.

"When the match was a-making, says ould Bandbox to Jack, 'Mr. Magennis,' says he (for nobody called him Jack now but his mother), 'these two things you must comply with, if you marry my daughter, Miss Gripsy: you must send away your mother from about you, and pull down the cabin in which you and she used to live; Gripsy says that they would jog her memory consarning your low birth and former poverty. She's nervous and high-spirited, Mr.

Magennis, and declares upon her honour that she couldn't bear the thoughts of having the delicacy of her feeling offinded by these things.'

"'Good-morning to you both,' says Jack, like an honest fellow as he was. 'If she doesn't marry me except on these conditions, give her my compliments, and tell her our courtship is at an end.'

"But it wasn't long till they soon came out with another story, for before a week passed they were very glad to get him on his own conditions. Jack was now as happy as the day was long—all things appointed for the wedding, and nothing a-wanting to make everything to his heart's content but the wife, and her he was to have in less than no time. For a day or two before the wedding there never was seen such grand preparations: bullocks, and hogs, and sheep were roasted whole—kegs of whisky, both Roscrea and Innishowen, barrels of ale and beer, were there in dozens. All descriptions of niceties, and wild-fowl, and fish from the say, and the dearest wine that could be bought with money, was got for the gentry and grand folks. Fiddlers, and pipers, and harpers—in short, all kinds of music and musicianers played in shoals. Lords and ladies and squares of high degree were present—and, to crown the thing, there was open house for all comers.

"At length the wedding-day arrived; there was nothing but roasting and boiling; servants dressed in rich liveries ran about with joy and delight in their countenances, and white gloves and wedding favours on their hats and hands. To make a long story short, they were all seated in Jack's castle at the wedding breakfast, ready for the priest to marry them when they'd be done; for in them times people were never married until they had laid in a good foundation to carry them through the ceremony. Well, they were all seated round the table, the men dressed in the best of broadcloth, and the ladies rustling in their silks and satins, their heads, necks, and arms hung round with jewels both rich and rare; but of all that were there that day there wasn't the likes of the bride and bridegroom. As for him, nobody could think, at all, at all, that he was ever anything else than a born gintleman; and, what was more to his credit, he had his

kind ould mother sitting beside the bride, to tache her that an honest person, though poorly born, is company for the King. As soon as the breakfast was served up, they all set to, and maybe the vaarious kinds of eatables did not pay for it; and amongst all this cutting and thrusting, no doubt but it was remarked that the bride herself was behindhand wid none of them—that she took her dalin-trick without flinching, and made nothing less than a right fog meal of it; and small blame to her for that same, you persave.

"When the breakfast was over, up gets Father Flanagan, out with his book, and on with his stole, to marry them. The bride and bridegroom went up to the end of the room, attended by their friends, and the rest of the company stood on each side of it; for, you see, they were too high bred, and knew their manners too well, to stand in a crowd like *spalpeens*. For all that, there was many a sly look from the ladies to their bachelors, and many a titter among them, grand as they were; for, to tell the truth, the best of them likes to see fun in the way, particularly of that sort. The priest himself was in as great a glee as any of them, only he kept it under, and well he might, for sure enough this marriage was nothing less than a rale windfall to him, and the parson that was to marry them after him—bekase, you persave, a Protestant and Catholic must be married by both, otherwise it doesn't hould good in law. The parson was as grave as a mustard-pot, and Father Flanagan called the bride and bridegroom his childher, which was a big bounce for him to say the likes of, more betoken that neither of them was a drop's blood to him.

"However, he pulled out the book, and was just be ginning to buckle them, when in comes Jack's ould acquaintance, the smoking cur, as grave as ever. The priest had just got through two or three words of Latin, when the dog gives him a pluck by the sleeve. Father Flanagan, of coorse, turned round to see who it was that nudged him. 'Behave yourself,' says the dog to him, just as he peeped over his shoulder—'behave yourself,' says he; and with that he sot him down on his hunkers beside the priest, and pulling a cigar, instead of a pipe, out of his pocket, he put it in his mouth, and began to smoke for the bare life of him. And,

by my own word, it's he that could smoke: at times he would shoot the smoke in a slender stream, like a knitting-needle, with a round curl at the one end of it, ever so far out of the right side of his mouth; then he would shoot it out of the left, and sometimes make it swirl out so beautiful from the middle of his lips!—why, then, it's he that must have been the well-bred puppy all out, as far as smoking went. Father Flanagan and they all were tundherstruck.

"'In the name of St. Anthony, and of that holy nun St. Teresa,' said his reverence to him, 'who or what are you, at all, at all?'

"'Never mind that,' says the dog, taking the cigar for a minute between his claws; 'but if you wish particularly to know, I'm a thirty-second cousin of your own, by the mother's side.'

"'I command you, in the name of all the saints,' says Father Flanagan, 'to disappear from among us, and never become visible to any one in this house again.'

"'The sorra a budge, at the present time, will I budge,' says the dog to him, 'until I see all sides rightified, and the rogues disappointed.'

"Now one would be apt to think the appearance of a spaking dog might be after fright'ning the ladies; but doesn't all the world know that spaking puppies are their greatest favourites. Instead of that, you see, there was half a dozen of fierce-looking whiskered fellows, and three or four half-pay officers, that were nearer making off than the ladies. But, besides the cigar, the dog had, upon this occasion, a pair of green spectacles acrass his face, and through these, while he was spaking to Father Flanagan, he ogled all the ladies, one after another, and when his eye would light upon any that pleased him he would kiss his paw to her and wag his tail with the greatest politeness.

"'John,' says Father Flanagan to one of the servants, 'bring me salt and water, till I consecrate them to banish the divil, for he has appeared to us all during broad daylight, in the shape of a dog.'

"'You had better behave yourself, I say again,' says the dog, 'or if you make me speak, by my honour as a gintleman, I'll expose you. I say, you won't marry the same two, neither

this nor any other day, and I'll give you my rasons presently; but I repate it, Father Flanagan, if you compel me to speak, I'll make you look nine ways at once.'

"'I defy you, Satan,' says the priest; 'and if you don't take yourself away before the holy wather's made, I'll send you off in a flame of fire.'

"'Yes, I'm trimbling,' says the dog: 'plenty of spirits you laid in your day, but it was in a place that's nearer us than the Red Sea you did it. Listen to me, though, for I don't wish to expose you, as I said.' So he gets on his hind legs, put his nose to the priest's ear, and whispers something to him that none of the rest could hear—all before the priest had time to know where he was. At any rate, whatever he said seemed to make his reverence look double, though, faix, that wasn't hard to do, for he was as big as two common men. When the dog was done speaking, and had put his cigar in his mouth, the priest seemed tundherstruck, crossed himself, and was, no doubt of it, in great perplexity.

"'I say it's false,' says Father Flanagan, plucking up courage; 'but you know you're a liar, and the father of liars.'

"'As thrue as gospel, this bout, I tell you,' says the dog.

"'Wait till I make my holy wather,' says the priest, 'and if I don't cork you in a thumb bottle for this, I'm not here.'

"'You're better at uncorking,' says the dog—'better at relasing spirits than confining them.'

"Just at this minute the whole company sees a gintleman galloping for the bare life of him up to the hall-door, and he dressed like an officer. In three jiffeys he was down off his horse, and in among the company. The dog, as soon as he made his appearance, laid his claw as usual on his nose, and gave the bridegroom a wink, as much as to say, 'Watch what'll happen.'

"Now it was very odd that Jack, during all this time, remembered the dog very well, but could never once think of the darling that did so much for him. As soon, however, as the officer made his appearance, the bride seemed as if she would sink outright; and when he walked up to her, to ax what was the meaning of what he saw, why, down she drops at once—fainted clane. The gintleman then went up

to Jack, and says, 'Sir, was this lady about to be married to you?'

"'Sartinly,' says Jack; 'we were going to be yoked in the blessed and holy tackle of mathrimony,' or some high-flown words of that kind.

"'Well, sir,' says the other back to him, 'I can only say that she is most solemnly sworn never to marry another man but me. That oath she tuck when I was joining my regiment before it went abroad; and if the ceremony of your marriage be performed, you will sleep with a perjured bride.'

"Begad, he did, plump before all their faces. Jack, of coorse, was struck all of a hape at this; but as he had the bride in his arms, giving her a little sup of whisky to bring her to, you persave, he couldn't make him an answer. However, she soon came to herself, and, on opening her eyes, 'Oh! hide me, hide me!' says she, 'for I can't bear to look on him!'

"'He says you are his sworn bride, my darling,' says Jack.

"'I am—I am,' says she, covering her eyes, and crying away at the rate of a wedding. 'I can't deny it; and, by tare-an-ounty!' says she, 'I'm unworthy to be either his wife or yours; for, except I marry you both, I dunna how to settle this affair between you at all—oh, murther *sheery!* but I'm the misfortunate crathur entirely.'

"'Well,' says Jack to the officer, 'nobody can do more than be sorry for a wrong turn; small blame to her for taking a fancy to your humble servant, Mr. Officer'—and he stood as tall as possible, to show himself off. 'You see the fair lady is sorrowful for her folly; so, as it's not yet too late, and as you came in the nick of time, in the name of Providence take my place, and let the marriage go an.'

"'No,' says she, 'never; I'm not worthy of him, at all, at all! Tundher-an-age, but I'm the unlucky thief!'

"While this was going forward, the officer looked closely at Jack, and seeing him such a fine, handsome fellow, and having heard before of his riches, he began to think that, all things considhered, she wasn't so much to be blempt. Then, when he saw how sorry she was for having forgot him, he steps forrid.

"'Well,' says he, 'I'm still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel conthrition——'"

"He should have said contrition, confession, and satisfaction," observed Father Peter.

"Pether, will you keep your theology to yourself," replied Father Ned, "and let us come to the plot without interruption."

"Plot!" exclaimed Father Peter. "I'm sure it's no rebellion, that there should be a plot in it, any way!"

"*Tace*," said Father Ned—"*tace*, and that's Latin for a candle."

"I deny that," said the curate; "*tace* is the imperative mood from *taceo*, to keep silent. *Taceo, taces, tacui, tacere, tacendi, tacendo, tac*——"

"Ned, go on with your story, and never mind that deep larning of his—he's almost cracked with it," said the superior: "go on, and never mind him."

"'Well,' says he, 'I'm still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel conthrition for what you were going to do.' So, with this, they all gother about her, and, as the officer was a fine fellow himself, prevailed upon her to let the marriage be performed, and they were accordingly spliced as fast as his reverence could make them.

"'Now, Jack,' says the dog, 'I want to spake with you for a minute—it's a word for your own ear.' So he stands up on his two hind legs, and purtinded to be whisp'ring something to him; but what do you think?—he gives him the slightest touch on the lips with his paw, and that instant Jack remimbered the lady and everything that happened betune them.

"'Tell me this instant,' says Jack, seizing him by the throath, 'where's the darling, at all, at all?'

"Jack spoke finer nor this, to be sure; but, as I can't give his tall English, the sorra one of me will bother myself striving to do it.

"'Behave yourself,' says the dog; 'just say nothing, only follow me.'

"Accordingly, Jack went out with the dog, and in a few minutes comes in again, leading along with him, on the one side, the loveliest lady that ever eye beheld, and the dog, that was her brother, now metamurphied into a beautiful, illegant gintleman, on the other.

"'Father Flanagan,' says Jack, 'you thought a while ago you'd have no marriage, but instead of that you'll have a brace of them;' up and telling the company, at the same time, all that happened him, and how the beautiful crathur that he brought in with him had done so much for him.

"Whin the gintlemen heard this, as they were all Irishmen, you may be sure there was nothing but huzzaing and throwing up of hats from them, and waving of hankerchers from the ladies. Well, my dear, the wedding dinner was ate in great style; the nobleman promised no disgrace to his rank at the trencher; and so, to make a long story short, such faisting and banqueteering was never seen since or before. At last night came; and, among ourselves, not a doubt of it, but Jack thought himself a happy man; and, maybe, if all was known, the bride was much of the same opinion: be that as it may, night came—the bride, all blushing, beautiful, and modest as your own sweetheart, was getting tired after the dancing; Jack, too, though much stouter, wished for a trifle of repose, and many thought it was near time to throw the stocking, as is proper, of coorse, on every occasion of the kind. Well, he was just on his way upstairs, and had reached the first landing, when he hears a voice at his ear shouting, 'Jack, Jack—Jack Magennis!' Jack could have spitted anybody for coming to disturb him at such a criticality. 'Jack Magennis!' says the voice. Jack looked about to see who it was that called him, and there he found himself lying on the green Rath, a little above his mother's cabin, of a fine calm summer's evening in the month of June. His mother was stooping over him, with her mouth at his ear, striving to waken him by shouting and shaking him out of his sleep.

"'Oh! by this and by that, mother,' says Jack, 'what did you waken me for?'

"'Jack, *avourneen*,' says the mother, 'sure and you war lying grunting, and groaning, and snifthering there, for all the world as if you had the colic; and I only nudged you for fraid you war in pain.'

"'I wouldn't for a thousand guineas,' says Jack, 'that ever you wakened me, at all, at all; but whisht, mother, go into the house, and I'll be afther you in less than no time.'

"The mother went in, and the first thing Jack did was

to try the rock, and, sure enough, there he found as much money as made him the richest man that ever was in the country. And what was to his credit, when he did grow rich he wouldn't let his cabin be thrown down, but built a fine castle on a spot near it, where he could always have it under his eye, to prevent him from getting proud. In the coorse of time, a harper, hearing the story, composed a tune upon it which everybody knows is called the 'Little House under the Hill' to this day, beginning with—

'Hi for it, ho for it, hi for it still;
Och, and whoo! your sowl—hi for the little house under the hill!'

"So you see that was the way the great Magennises first came by their wealth, and all because Jack was industrious, and an obadient, dutiful, tindher son to his helpless ould mother; and well he desarved what he got, *ershi misha.*[1] Your healths—Father Ned—Father Pether—all kinds of happiness to us; and there's my story."

"Well," said Father Peter, "I think that dog was nothing more or less than a downright cur, that deserved the lash nine times a day, if it was only for his want of respect to the clergy; if he had given me such insolence, I solemnly declare I would have bate the devil out of him with a hazel cudgel, if I failed to exorcise him with a prayer."

Father Ned looked at the simple and credulous curate with an expression of humour and astonishment.

"Paddy," said he to the servant, "will you let us know what the night's doing?"

Paddy looked out. "Why, your rev'rence, it's a fine night, all out, and cleared up it is bravely."

At this moment the stranger awoke. "Sir," said Father Ned, "you missed an amusing story in consequence of your somnolency."

"Though I missed the story," replied the stranger, "I was happy enough to hear your friend's critique upon the dog."

Father Ned seemed embarrassed. The curate, on the contrary, exclaimed with triumph, "But wasn't I right, sir?"

[1] Say I.

"Perfectly," said the stranger; "the moral you applied was excellent."

"Good-night, boys," said Father Ned—"good-night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus!"

"Good-night, boys," said Father Peter, imitating Father Ned, whom he looked upon as a perfect model of courtesy—"good-night, boys; good-night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus!"

"Good-night," replied the stranger; "good-night, Doctor Ned—hem!—Doctor Edward Deleery; and good-night, Dr. Peter M'Clatchaghan—good-night!"

When the clergymen were gone, the circle about the fire, excepting the members of Ned's family and the stranger, dispersed to their respective homes; and thus ended the amusement of that evening.

After they had separated, Ned, whose curiosity respecting the stranger was by no means satisfied, began to sift him in his own peculiar manner as they both sat at the fire.

"Well, sir," said Ned, "barring the long playacther that tumbles upon the big stage in the street of our market-town here below, I haven't seen so long a man this many a day; and, barring your big whiskers, the sorra one of your honour's unlike him. A fine portly vagabone he is, indeed—a big man; and a bigger rogue, they say, for he pays nobody."

"Have you got such a company in your neighbourhood?" inquired the stranger, with indifference.

"We have, sir," said Ned; "but, plase goodness, they'll soon be lashed like hounds from the place—the town boys are preparing to give them a chivey some fine morning out of the country."

"Indeed!—he—hem!—that will be very spirited of the town boys," said the stranger dryly.

"That's a smart-looking horse your honour rides," observed Ned; "did he carry you far to-day, with submission?"

"Not far," replied his companion—"only fourteen miles. But, I suppose, the fact is, you wish to know who and what I am, where I came from, and whither I am going. Well, you shall know this. In the first place, I am agent to Lord Non-Resident's estate, if you ever heard of that nobleman,

and I am on my way from Castle Ruin, the seat of his lordship's encumbrances, to Dublin. My name you have already heard. Are you now satisfied?"

"Parfitly, your honour," replied Ned, "and I'm much obliged to you, sir."

"I trust you are an honest man," said the stranger; "because, for this night, I am about to place great confidence in you."

"Well, sir," said his landlord, "if I turn out dishonest to you, it's more nor I did in my whole life to anybody else, barring to Nancy."

"Here, then," said the stranger, drawing out a large packet, enclosed in a roll of black leather, "here is the half-year's rent of the estate, together with my own property; keep it secure till morning, when I shall demand it, and, of course, it will be safe?"

"As if it was five fadom under ground," replied Ned. "I will put it along with our own trifle of silver; and after that, let Nancy alone for keeping it safe so long as it's there!" saying which, Ned secured the packet, and showed the stranger his bed.

About five o'clock the next morning their guest was up, and ordered a snack in all haste. "Being a military man," said he, "and accustomed to timely hours, I shall ride down to the town, and put a letter into the post-office in time for the Dublin mail, after which you may expect me to breakfast. But, in the meantime, I am not to go with empty pockets," he added, when mounting his horse at the door. "Bring me silver, landlord, and be quick."

"How much, plase your honour?"

"Twenty or thirty shillings; but, harkee, produce my packet, that I may be certain my property is safe."

"Here it is, your honour, safe and sound," replied Ned; "and Nancy, sir, has sent you all the silver she has, which was one pound five; but I'd take it as a favour if your honour would be contint with twenty shillings, and lave me the other five; for you see the case is this, sir, plase your honour, she"—and Ned, with a shrewd humorous nod, pointed with his thumb over his shoulder as he spoke—"she wears the—what you know, sir."

"Ay, I thought so," replied the stranger; "but a man of your size, to be hen-pecked, must be a great knave, otherwise your wife would allow you more liberty. Go in, man; you deserve no compassion in such an age of freedom as this. I shan't give you a farthing till after my return, and only then if it be agreeable to your wife."

"Murdher!" said Ned, astonished. "I beg your honour's pardon; murdher alive, sir, where's your whiskers?"

The stranger put his hand hastily to his face, and smiled. "Where are my whiskers? Why, shaved off, to be sure," he replied; and setting spurs to his horse, was soon out of sight and hearing.

It was nearly a month after that when Ned and Nancy, in presence of Father Deleery, opened the packet, and discovered, not the half year's rent of Lord Non-Resident's estate, but a large sheaf of play-bills packed up together—their guest having been the identical person to whom Ned affirmed he bore so strong a resemblance.

SHANE FADH'S[1] WEDDING

ON the following evening the neighbours were soon assembled about Ned's hearth, in the same manner as on the night preceding.

And we may observe, by the way, that although there was a due admixture of opposite creeds and conflicting principles, yet even then, and the time is not so far back, such was their cordiality of heart and simplicity of manners, when contrasted with the bitter and rancorous spirit of the present day, that the very remembrance of the harmony in which they lived is at once pleasing and melancholy.

After some preliminary chat—"Well, Shane," said Andy Morrow, addressing Shane Fadh, "will you give us an account of your wedding? I'm told it was the greatest let-out that ever was in this country, before or since."

"And you may say that, Mr. Morrow," said Shane. "I was at many a wedding myself, but never at the likes of my own, barring Tim Lanigan's, that married Father Corrigan's niece."

"I believe," said Andy, "that, too, was a dashing one; however, it's your own we want. Come, Nancy, fill these measures again, and let us be comfortable, at all events, and give Shane a double one, for talking's druthy work. I'll pay for this round."

When the liquor was got in, Shane, after taking a draught, laid down his pint, pulled out his steel tobacco-box, and, after twisting off a chew between his teeth, closed the box, and commenced the story of his wedding.

"When I was a *Brine-Oge*,"[2] said Shane, "I was as wild as an unbroken cowlt—no divilment was too hard for me; and so signs on it, for there wasn't a piece of mischief done in the parish but was laid at my door—and the dear knows I had enough of my own to answer for, let alone to be set down for

[1] *Shane Fadh* means Long John.
[2] A young man full of fun and frolic.

that of other people; but, anyway, there was many a thing done in my name, when I knew neither act nor part about it. One of them I'll mintion: Dick Cuillenan, father to Paddy that lives at the crass-roads, beyant Gunpowdher Lodge, was over head and ears in love with Jemmy Finigan's eldest daughter, Mary, then, sure enough, as purty a girl as you'd meet in a fair—indeed, I think I'm looking at her, with her fair flaxen ringlets hanging over her shoulders, as she used to pass our house, going to mass of a Sunday. God rest her sowl, she's now in glory—that was before she was my wife. Many a happy day we passed together; and I could take it to my death, that an ill word, let alone to rise our hands to one another, never passed between us—only one day, that a word or two happened about the dinner, in the middle of Lent, being a little too late, so that the horses were kept nigh hand half an hour out of the plough; and I wouldn't have valued that so much, only that it was *Bealcam* [1] Doherty that joined me in ploughing that year, and I was vexed not to take all I could out of him, for he was a raal Turk himself.

"I disremimber now what passed between us as to words, but I know I had a duck-egg in my hand, and when she spoke, I raised my arm, and nailed—poor Larry Tracy, our servant boy, between the two eyes with it, although the crathur was ating his dinner quietly forenent me, not saying a word.

"Well, as I tould you, Dick was ever after her, although her father and mother would rather see her under boord than joined to any of that connection; and as for herself, she couldn't bear the sight of him, he was sich an upsetting, conceited puppy, that thought himself too good for every girl. At any rate, he tried often and often, in fair and market, to get striking up with her; and both coming from and going to mass 'twas the same way, for ever after and about her, till the state he was in spread over the parish like wildfire. Still, all he could do was of no use; except to bid him the time of day, she never entered into discoorse with him at all, at all. But there was no putting the likes of him

[1] *Bealcam* or *Cam Beal* (crooked mouth) is the modern name of Campbell, corrupted. The first Campbell got the name on account of his wry or crooked mouth, just as the first Cameron was called by that name by reason of his crooked nose.

off; so he got a quart of spirits in his pocket one night, and without saying a word to mortal, off he sets, full speed, to her father's, in order to brake the thing to the family.

"Mary might be about seventeen at this time, and her mother looked almost as young and fresh as if she hadn't been married at all. When Dick came in, you may be sure they were all surprised at the sight of him; but they were civil people, and the mother wiped a chair, and put it over near the fire for him to sit down upon, waiting to hear what he'd say, or what he wanted, although they could give a purty good guess as to that, but they only wished to put him off with as little offince as possible. When Dick sot a while, talking about what the price of hay and oats would be in the following summer, and other subjects that he thought would show his knowledge of farming and cattle, he pulls out his bottle, encouraged to it by their civil way of talking, and telling the ould couple that as he came over on his *kailyee* he had brought a drop in his pocket to sweeten the discoorse, axing Susy Finigan, the mother, for a glass to send it round with, at the same time drawing over his chair close to Mary, who was knitting her stocken up beside her little brother Michael, and chatting to the *gorsoon,* for fraid that Cuillenan might think she paid him any attention. When Dick got alongside of her, he began, of coorse, to pull out her needles and spoil her knitting, as is customary before the young people come to close spaking. Mary, howsomever, had no welcome for him; so says she, 'You ought to know, Dick Cuillenan, who you spake to before you make the freedom you do.'

"'But you don't know,' says Dick, 'that I am a great hand at spoiling the girls' knitting; it's a fashion I've got,' says he.

"'It's a fashion, then,' says Mary, 'that'll be apt to get you a broken mouth some time.'[1]

"'Then,' says Dick, 'whoever does that must marry me.'

[1] It is no unusual thing in Ireland for a country girl to repulse a fellow whom she thinks beneath her, if not by a flat at least by a flattening refusal; nor is it seldom that the "argumentum fistycuffium" is resorted to on such occasions. I have more than once seen a disagreeable lover receive, from the fair hand which he sought, so masterly a blow, that a bleeding nose rewarded his ambition, and silenced for a time his importunity.

"'And them that gets you will have a prize to brag of,' says she. 'Stop yourself, Cuillenan; single your freedom and double your distance, if you plase; I'll cut my coat of no such cloth.'

"'Well, Mary,' says he, 'maybe, if you don't, as good will; but you won't be so cruel as all that comes to; the worst side of you is out, I think.'

"He was now beginning to make greater freedom, but Mary rises from her seat, and whisks away with herself, her cheek as red as a rose with vexation at the fellow's imperance. 'Very well,' says Dick, 'off you go; but there's as good fish in the say as ever was catched. I'm sorry to see, Susy,' says he to her mother, 'that Mary's no friend of mine, and I'd be mighty glad to find it otherwise; for, to tell the truth, I'd wish to become connected with the family. In the manetime, hadn't you better get us a glass, till we drink one bottle on the head of it, any way.'

"'Why, then, Dick Cuillenan,' says the mother, 'I don't wish you anything else than good luck and happiness; but, as to Mary, she's not for you herself, nor would it be a good match between the families at all. Mary is to have her grandfather's sixty guineas, and the two *moulleens*[1] that her uncle Jack left her four years ago has brought her a good stock for any farm. Now, if she married you, Dick, where's the farm to bring her to?—surely it's not upon them seven acres of stone and bent, upon the long Esker,[2] that I'd let my daughter go to live. So, Dick, put up your bottle, and, in the name of God, go home, boy, and mind your business; but, above all, when you want a wife, go to them that you may have a right to expect, and not to a girl like Mary Finigan, that could lay down guineas where you could hardly find shillings.'

"'Very well, Susy,' says Dick, nettled enough, as he well might; 'I say to you, just as I say to your daughter, if you be proud, there's no force.'"

"But what has this to do with you, Shane?" asked Andy Morrow. "Sure, we wanted to hear an account of your

[1] Cows without horns.
[2] Esker is a high ridge of land.

wedding, but, instead of that, it's Dick Cuillenan's history you're giving us."

"That's just it," said Shane; "sure, only for this same Dick, I'd never get Mary Finigan for a wife. Dick took Susy's advice, bekase, after all, the undacent drop was in him, or he'd never have brought the bottle out of the house at all; but, faith, he riz up, put the whisky in his pocket, and went home with a face on him as black as my hat with venom. Well, things passed on till the Christmas following, when one night, after the Finigans had all gone to bed, there comes a crowd of fellows to the door, thumping at it with great violence, and swearing that, if the people within wouldn't open it immediately, it would be smashed into *smithereens*. The family, of coorse, were all alarmed; but somehow or other, Susy herself got suspicious that it might be something about Mary; so up she gets, and sends the daughter to her own bed, and lies down herself in the daughter's.

"In the manetime, Finigan got up, and, after lighting a candle, opened the door at once. 'Come, Finigan,' says a strange voice, 'put out the candle, except you wish to make a candlestick of the thatch,' says he—'or to give you a prod of a bagnet under the ribs,' says he.

"It was a folly for one man to go to bell-the-cat with a whole crowd; so he blew the candle out, and next minute they rushed in, and went as straight as a rule to Mary's bed. The mother all the time lay close, and never said a word. At any rate, what could be expected, only that, do what she could, at the long-run she must go. So, accordingly, after a very hard battle on her side, being a powerful woman, she was obliged to travel—but not till she had left many of them marks to remimber her by; among the rest, Dick himself got his nose split on his face with the stroke of a churnstaff, so that he carried half a nose on each cheek till the day of his death. Still, there was very little spoke, for they didn't wish to betray themselves on any side. The only thing that Finigan could hear was my name repated several times, as if the whole thing was going on under my direction; for Dick thought, that if there was any one in the parish likely to be set down for it, it was me.

"When Susy found they were for putting her behind one of them on a horse, she rebelled again, and it took near a dozen of boys to hoist her up; but one vagabone of them, that had a rusty broad-sword in his hand, gave her a skelp with the flat side of it that subdued her at once, and off they went. Now, above all nights in the year, who should be dead but my own full cousin, Denis Fadh—God be good to him!—and I, and Jack and Dan, his brothers, while bringing home whisky for the wake and berrin, met them on the road. At first we thought them distant relations coming to the wake, but when I saw only one woman among the set, and she mounted on a horse, I began to suspect that all wasn't right. I accordingly turned back a bit, and walked near enough, without their seeing me, to hear the discoorse and discover the whole business. In less than no time I was back at the wake-house; so I up and tould them what I saw, and off we set, about forty of us, with good cudgels, scythe-sneds, and hooks, fully bent to bring her back from them, come or go what would. And troth, sure enough, we did it; and I was the man myself that rode after the mother on the same horse that carried her off.

"From this out, when and wherever I got an opportunity, I whispered the soft nonsense, Nancy, into poor Mary's ear, until I put my *comedher*[1] on her, and she couldn't live at all without me. But I was something for a woman to look at then, anyhow, standing six feet two in my stocking soles, which, you know, made them call me Shane Fadh. At that time I had a dacent farm of fourteen acres in Crocknagooran—the same that my son Ned has at the present time; and though, as to wealth, by no manner of manes fit to compare with the Finigans, yet, upon the whole, she might have made a worse match. The father, however, wasn't for me, but the mother was; so, after drinking a bottle or two with the mother, Sarah Traynor, her cousin, and Mary, along with Jack Donnellan on my part, in their own barn, unknownst to the father, we agreed to make a runaway match of it—appointed my uncle, Brian Slevin's, as the house we'd go to.

[1] *Comedher*—come hither—alluding to the burden of an old love charm which is still used by the young of both sexes on May morning. It is a literal translation of the Irish word *gutsho.*

The next Sunday was the day appointed ; so I had my uncle's family prepared, and sent two gallons of whisky, to be there before us, knowing that neither the Finigans nor my own friends liked stinginess.

"Well, well, after all, the world is a strange thing—if myself hardly knows what to make of it. It's I that did dote night and day upon that girl ; and indeed there was them that could have seen me in Jimmaiky for her sake, for she was the beauty of the county, not to say of the parish, for a girl in her station. For my part I could neither ate nor sleep, for thinking that she was so soon to be my own married wife, and to live under my roof. And when I'd think of it, how my heart would bounce to my throat with downright joy and delight. The mother had made us promise not to meet till Sunday, for fraid of the father becoming suspicious; but, if I was to be shot for it, I couldn't hinder myself from going every night to the great flowering whitethorn that was behind their garden, and although she knew I hadn't promised to come, yet there she still was—something, she said, tould her I would come.

"The next Sunday we met at Althadhawan wood, and I'll never forget what I felt when I was going to the green at St. Patrick's Chair, where the boys and girls met on Sunday ; but there she was—the bright eyes dancing with joy in her head to see me. We spent the evening in the wood till it was dusk—I bating them all leaping, dancing, and throwing the stone ; for, by my song, I thought I had the action of ten men in me ; she looking on, and smiling like an angel, when I'd lave them miles behind me. As it grew dusk they all went home, except herself, and me, and a few more, who, maybe, had something of the same kind on hands.

"'Well, Mary,' says I, '*acushla machree*, it's dark enough for us to go ; and in the name of God let us be off.' The crathur looked into my face, and got pale—for she was very young then. 'Shane,' says she, and she thrimbled like an aspen lafe, 'I'm going to trust myself with you for ever—for ever, Shane, *avourneen*'—and her sweet voice broke into purty murmurs as she spoke ; 'whether for happiness or sorrow, God He only knows. I can bear poverty and distress, sickness and want, with you, but I can't bear to think that you

should ever forget to love me as you do now, or that your heart should ever cool to me; but I'm sure,' says she, 'you'll never forget this night, and the solemn promises you made me before God and the blessed skies above us.'

"We were sitting at the time under the shade of a rowan tree, and I had only one answer to make—I pulled her to my breast, where she laid her head and cried like a child, with her cheek against mine. My own eyes weren't dry, although I felt no sorrow, but—but—I never forgot that night—and I never will."

He now paused a few minutes, being too much affected to proceed.

"Poor Shane," said Nancy in a whisper to Andy Morrow, "night and day he's thinking about that woman; she's now dead going on a year, and you would think by him, although he bears up very well before company, that she died only yestherday—but indeed it's he that was always the kind-hearted, affectionate man; and a better husband never broke bread."

"Well," said Shane, resuming the story, and clearing his voice, "it's a great consolation to me, now that she's gone, to think that I never broke the promise I made her that night; for, as I tould you, except in regard of the duck-egg, a bitther word never passed between us. I was in a passion then, for a wonder, and bent on showing her that I was a dangerous man to provoke; so, just to give her a spice of what I could do, I made Larry feel it—and may God forgive me for raising my hand even then to her. But sure he would be a brute that would beat such a woman except by proxy. When it was clear dark we set off, and, after crossing the country for two miles, reached my uncle's, where a great many of my friends were expecting us. As soon as we came to the door I struck it two or three times, for that was the sign, and my aunt came out, and taking Mary in her arms, kissed her, and, with a thousand welcomes, brought us both in.

"You all know that the best of aiting and dhrinking is provided when a runaway couple is expected; and indeed there was *galore* of both there. My uncle and all that were within welcomed us again; and many a good song and hearty jug of punch was sent round that night. The next morning

my uncle went to her father's, and broke the business to him at once; indeed, it wasn't very hard to do, for I believe it reached him before he saw my uncle at all; so she was brought home that day, and, on the Thursday night after, I, my father, uncle, and several other friends went there, and made the match. She had sixty guineas that her grandfather left her, thirteen head of cattle, two feather and two chaff beds, with sheeting, quilts, and blankets; three pieces of bleached linen, and a flock of geese of her own rearing—upon the whole, among ourselves, it wasn't aisy to get such a fortune.

"Well, the match was made, and the wedding-day appointed; but there was one thing still to be managed, and that was how to get over the standing at mass on Sunday, to make satisfaction for the scandal we gave the church by running away with one another—but that's all stuff, for who cares a pin about standing, when three halves of the parish are married in the same way. The only thing that vexed me was that it would keep back the wedding-day. However, her father and my uncle went to the priest, and spoke to him, trying, of coorse, to get us off of it; but he knew we were fat geese, and was in for giving us a plucking. Hut, tut!—he wouldn't hear of it at all, not he; for although he would ride fifty miles to sarve either of us, he couldn't brake the new orders that he had got only a few days before that from the bishop. No, we must stand,[1] for it would be setting a bad example to the parish; and if he would let *us* pass, how could he punish the rest of his flock when they'd be guilty of the same thing.

"'Well, well, your reverence,' says my uncle, winking at her father, 'if that's the case it can't be helped anyhow—they must only stand, as many a dacent father and mother's child has done before them, and will again, plase God—your reverence is right in doing your duty.'

"'True for you, Brian,' says his reverence; 'and yet, God knows, there's no man in the parish would be sorrier to see such a dacent, comely young couple put upon a level with

[1] To "stand" is to be publicly rebuked by the priest at mass, the delinquents standing up.—ED.

all the scrubs of the parish; and I know, Jemmy Finigan, it would go hard with your young, bashful daughter to get through with it, having the eyes of the whole congregation staring on her.'

"'Why then, your reverence, as to that,' says my uncle, who was just as stiff as the other was stout, 'the bashfullest of them will do more nor that to get a husband.'

"'But you tell me,' says the priest, 'that the wedding-day is fixed upon; how will you manage there?'

"'Why, put it off for three Sundays longer, to be sure,' says the uncle.

"'But you forget this, Brian,' says the priest, 'that good luck or prosperity never attends the putting off of a wedding.'

"Now here you see is where the priest had them—for they knew that as well as his reverence himself; so they were in a puzzle again.

"'It's a disagreeable business,' says the priest; 'but the truth is, I could get them off with the bishop, only for one thing—I owe him five guineas of altar-money, and I'm so far back in dues that I'm not able to pay him. If I could enclose this to him in a letter, I would get them off at once, although it would be bringing myself into trouble with the parish afterwards; but, at all events,' says he, 'I wouldn't make every one of you both; so, to prove that I wish to sarve you, I'll sell the best cow in my byre, and pay him myself, rather than their wedding-day should be put off, poor things, or themselves brought to any bad luck—the Lord keep them from it!'

"While he was speaking, he stamped his foot two or three times on the flure, and the housekeeper came in. 'Katty,' says he, 'bring us in a bottle of whisky. At all events, I can't let you away,' says he, 'without tasting something, and drinking luck to the young folks.'

"'In troth,' says Jemmy Finigan, 'and begging your reverence's pardon, the sorra cow you'll sell this bout, anyhow, on account of me or my childher, bekase I'll lay down on the nail what'll clear you and the bishop; and in the name of goodness, as the day is fixed and all, let the crathurs not be disappointed.'

"'Jemmy,' says my uncle, 'if you go to that, you'll pay

but your share, for I insist upon laying down one-half at laste.'

"At any rate, they came down with the cash, and, after drinking a bottle between them, went home in choice spirits entirely at their good luck in so aisily getting us off. When they had left the house a bit, the priest sent after them. 'Jemmy,' says he to Finigan, 'I forgot a circumstance, and that is to tell you that I will go and marry them at your own house, and bring Father James, my curate, with me.' 'Oh, *wurrah!* no,' said both; 'don't mention that, your reverence, except you wish to break their hearts, out and out! Why, that would be a thousand times worse nor making them stand to do penance. Doesn't your reverence know that if they hadn't the pleasure of running for the bottle the whole wedding wouldn't be worth three-halfpence?' 'Indeed, I forgot that, Jemmy.' 'But sure,' says my uncle, 'your reverence and Father James must be at it, whether or not; for that we intended from the first.' 'Tell them I'll run for the bottle, too,' says the priest, laughing, 'and will make some of them look sharp—never fear.' Well, by my song, so far all was right; and maybe it's we that weren't glad—maning Mary and myself—that there was nothing more in the way to put off the wedding-day. So, as the bridegroom's share of the expense always is to provide the whisky, I'm sure, for the honour and glory of taking the blooming young crathur from the great lot of bachelors that were all breaking their hearts about her, I couldn't do less nor finish the thing dacently—knowing, besides, the high doings that the Finigans would have of it; for they were always looked upon as a family that never had their heart in a trifle when it would come to the push. So, you see, I and my brother Mickey, my cousin Tom, and Dom'nick Nulty, went up into the mountains to Tim Cassidy's still-house, where we spent a glorious day, and bought fifteen gallons of stuff that one drop of it would bring the tear, if possible, to a young widdy's eye that had berried a bad husband. Indeed, this was at my father's bidding, who wasn't a bit behindhand with any of them in cutting a dash. 'Shane,' says he to me, 'you know the Finigans of ould, that they won't be contint with what would do another, and

that except they go beyant the thing entirely they won't be satisfied. They'll have the whole country-side at the wedding, and we must let them see that we have a spirit and a faction of our own,' says he, 'that we needn't be ashamed of. They've got all kinds of ateables in cartloads, and as we're to get the drinkables we must see and give as good as they'll bring. I myself and your mother will go round and invite all we can think of, and let you and Mickey go up the hills to Tim Cassidy, and get fifteen gallons of whisky, for I don't think less will do us.'

"This we accordingly complied with, as I said, and surely better stuff never went down the red lane [1] than the same whisky; for the people knew nothing about watering it then, at all, at all. The next thing I did was to get a fine shop cloth coat, a pair of top boots, and buckskin breeches fit for a squire, along with a new Caroline hat that would throw off the wet like a duck. Mat Kavanagh, the schoolmaster from Findramore bridge, lent me his watch for the occasion, after my spending near two days learning from him to know what o'clock it was. At last, somehow, I masthered that point so well that in a quarter of an hour, at least, I could give a dacent guess at the time upon it.

"Well, at last the day came. The wedding morning, or the bride's part of it, as they say, was beautiful. It was then the month of July. The evening before, my father and my brother went over to Jemmy Finigan's, to make the regulations for the wedding. We, that is my party, were to be at the bride's house about ten o'clock, and we were then to proceed, all on horseback, to the priest's, to be married. We were then, after drinking something at Tom Hance's public-house, to come back, as far as the Dumbhill, where we were to start and run for the bottle. That morning we were all up at the skriek [2] of day. From six o'clock my own faction, friends and neighbours, began to come, all mounted; and about eight o'clock there was a whole regiment of them, some on horses, some on mules, others on *raheries* and asses; and, by my word, I believe little Dick Snudaghan, the tailor's apprentice, that had a hand in making my wedding clothes,

[1] Humorous periphrasis for throat. [2] Streak.

was mounted upon a buck goat, with a bridle of selvages tied to his horns. Anything at all to keep their feet from the ground; for nobody would be allowed to go with the wedding that hadn't some animal between them and the earth.

"To make a long story short, so large a bridegroom's party was never seen in that country before, save and except Tim Lannigan's, that I mentioned just now. It would make you split your face laughing to see the figure they cut: some of them had saddles and bridles; others had saddles and halthers; some had back-*sugganms* of straw, with hay stirrups to them, but good bridles; others had sacks filled up as like saddles as they could make them, girthed with hay ropes five or six times tied round the horse's body. When one or two of the horses wouldn't carry double, except the hind rider sat strideways, the women had to be put foremost, and the men behind them. Some had dacent pillions enough, but most of them had none at all, and the women were obligated to sit where the crupper ought to be—and a hard card they had to play to keep their seats even when the horses walked asy, so what must it be when they came to a gallop; but that same was nothing at all to a trot.

"From the time they began to come that morning, you may be sartain that the glass was no cripple, anyhow—although, for fear of accidents, we took care not to go too deep. At eight o'clock we sat down to a rousing breakfast, for we thought it best to eat a trifle at home, lest they might think that what we were to get at the bride's breakfast might be thought any novelty. As for my part, I was in such a state that I couldn't let a morsel cross my throat, nor did I know what end of me was uppermost. After breakfast they all got their cattle, and I my hat and whip, and was ready to mount, when my uncle whispered to me that I must kneel down and ax my father and mother's blessing, and forgiveness for all my disobedience and offinces towards them—and also to requist the blessing of my brothers and sisters. Well, in a short time I was down; and, my goodness! such a hullaballoo of crying as was there in a minute's time! 'Oh, Shane Fadh—Shane Fadh, *acushla machree!*' says my poor mother in Irish, 'you're going to break up the ring about your father's hearth and mine—

going to lave us, *avourneen*, for ever, and we to hear your light foot and sweet voice, morning, noon, and night, no more! Oh!' says she, 'it's you that was the good son all out; and the good brother, too: kind and cheerful was your beautiful voice, and full of love and affection was your heart! Shane, *avourneen deelish*, if ever I was harsh to you, forgive your poor mother, that will never see you more on her flure as one of her own family.'

"Even my father, that wasn't much given to crying, couldn't speak, but went over to a corner and cried till the neighbours stopped him. As for my brothers and sisters, they were all in an uproar; and I myself cried like a Trojan, merely bekase I *see* them at it. My father and mother both kissed me, and gave me their blessing; and my brothers and sisters did the same, while you'd think all their hearts would break. 'Come, come,' says my uncle, 'I'll have none of this. What a hubbub you make, and your son going to be well married—going to be joined to a girl that your betters would be proud to get into connection with. You should have more sense, Rose Campbell—you ought to thank God that he had the luck to come acrass such a *colleen* for a wife; that it's not going to his grave, instead of into the arms of a purty girl—and, what's better, a good girl. So quit your blubbering, Rose; and you, Jack,' says he to my father, 'that ought to have more sense, stop this instant. Clear off, every one of you, out of this, and let the young boy go to his horse. Clear out, I say, or by the powers I'll—look at them three stags of hussies; by the hand of my body, they're blubbering bekase it's not their own story this blessed day. Move—bounce!—and you, Rose Oge, if you're not behind Dudley Fulton in less than no time, by the hole of my coat, I'll marry a wife myself, and then where will the twenty guineas be that I'm to lave you.' God rest his soul, and yet there was a tear in his eye all the while—even in spite of his joking!

"Anyhow, it's easy knowing that there wasn't sorrow at the bottom of their grief; for they were all now laughing at my uncle's jokes, even while their eyes were red with the tears. My mother herself couldn't but be in good-humour, and join her smile with the rest.

"My uncle now drove us all out before him; not, however, till my mother had sprinkled a drop of holy water on each of us, and given me and my brother and sisters a small taste of blessed candle to prevent us from sudden death and accidents. My father and she didn't come with us then, but they went over to the bride's while we were all gone to the priest's house. At last we set off in great style and spirits—I well mounted on a good horse of my own, and my brother on one that he had borrowed from Peter Danellon, fully bent on winning the bottle. I would have borrowed him myself, but I thought it dacenter to ride my own horse manfully, even though he never won a side of mutton or a saddle, like Danellon's. But the man that was most likely to come in for the bottle was little Billy Cormick, the tailor, who rode a blood-racer that young John Little had wickedly lent him for the special purpose; he was a tall bay animal, with long small legs, a switch tail, and didn't know how to trot. Maybe we didn't cut a dash—and might have taken a town before us. Out we set about nine o'clock, and went acrass the country; but I'll not stop to mintion what happened to some of them, even before we got to the bride's house. It's enough to say here, that sometimes one in crassing a stile or ditch would drop into the *shough;* sometimes another would find himself head-foremost on the ground; a woman would be capsized here in crassing a ridgy field, bringing her fore-rider to the ground along with her; another would be hanging like a broken arch, ready to come down, till some one would ride up and fix her on the seat. But as all this happened in going over the fields, we expected that when we'd get out on the king's highway there would be less danger, as we would have no ditches or drains to crass. When we came in sight of the house, there was a general shout of welcome from the bride's party, who were on the watch for us. We couldn't do less nor give them back the chorus; but we had better have let that alone, for some of the young horses took the *stadh,* others of them capered about; the asses—the sorra choke them—that were along with us should begin to bray, as if it was the king's birthday; and a mule of Jack Irwin's took it into his head to stand stock-still. This brought another dozen of them to the ground; so that, between one thing or

another, we were near half an hour before we got on the march again. When the blood-horse that the tailor rode saw the crowd and heard the shouting, he cocked his ears, and set off with himself full speed; but before he had got far he was without a rider, and went galloping up to the bride's house, the bridle hangin' about his feet. Billy, however, having taken a glass or two, wasn't to be cowed; so he came up in great blood, and swore he would ride him to America, sooner than let the bottle be won from the bridegroom's party.

"When we arrived there was nothing but shaking hands and kissing, and all kinds of slewsthering—men kissing men —women kissing women—and after that men and women all through other. Another breakfast was ready for us; and here we all sat down, myself and my next relations in the bride's house, and the others in the barn and garden; for one house wouldn't hold the half of us. Eating, however, was all only talk: of coorse, we took some of the poteen again, and in a short time afterwards set off along the paved road to the priest's house, to be tied as fast as he could make us, and that was fast enough. Before we went out to mount our horses, though, there was just such a hullaballoo with the bride and her friends as there was with myself; but my uncle soon put a stop to it, and in five minutes had them breaking their hearts laughing.

"Bless my heart, what doings!—what roasting and boiling! —and what tribes of beggars and *shulers*, and vagabonds of all sorts and sizes, were sunning themselves about the doors —wishing us a thousand times long life and happiness. There was a fiddler and piper: the piper was to stop in my father-in-law's while we were going to be married, to keep the neighbours that were met there shaking their toes while we were at the priest's; and the fiddler was to come with ourselves, in order, you know, to have a dance at the priest's house, and to play for us coming and going; for there's nothing like a taste of music when one's on for sport. As we were setting off, ould Mary M'Quade from Kilnashogue, who was sent for bekase she understood charms, and had the name of being lucky, tuck myself aside. 'Shane Fadh,' says she, 'you're a young man well to look upon; may God

bless you and keep you so; and there's not a doubt but there's them here that wishes you ill—that would rather be in your shoes this blessed day, with your young *colleen bawn*, that 'ill be your wife before the sun sets, plase the heavens. There's ould Fanny Barton, the wrinkled thief of a hag, that the Finigans axed here for the sake of her decent son-in-law, who ran away with her daughter Betty, that was the great beauty some years ago: her breath's not good, Shane, and many a strange thing's said of her. Well, maybe I know more about that nor I'm going to mintion, anyhow; more betoken that it's not for nothing the white hare haunts the shrubbery behind her house.' 'But what harm could she do me, Sonsy Mary?' says I—for she was called Sonsy—'we have often sarved her one way or other.'

"'Ax me no questions about her, Shane,' says she; 'don't I know what she did to Ned Donnelly, that was to be pitied, if ever a man was to be pitied, for as good as seven months after his marriage until I relieved him; 'twas gone to a thread he was—and didn't they pay me decently for my throuble.'

"'Well, and what am I to do, Mary?' says I, knowing very well that what she *sed* was thrue enough, although I didn't wish her to see that I was afeard.

"'Why,' says she, 'you must first exchange money with me, and then, if you do as I bid you, you may lave the rest to myself.'

"I then took out, begad, a decent lot of silver—say a crown or so—for my blood was up, and the money was flush—and gave it to her; for which I got a *crona-bawn* halfpenny in exchange.

"'Now,' says she, 'Shane, you must keep this in your company, and, for your life and sowl, don't part with it for nine days after your marriage. But there's more to be done,' says she—'hould out your right knee.' So with this she unbuttoned three buttons of my buckskins, and made me loose the knot of my garther on the right leg. 'Now,' says she, 'if you keep them loose till after the priest says the words, and won't let the money I gave you go out of your company for nine days, along with something else I'll do that you're to know nothing about, there's no fear of all

their *pishthrogues.*'[1] She then pulled off her right shoe, and threw it after us for luck.

"We were now all in motion once more—the bride riding behind my man, and the bridesmaid behind myself—a fine bouncing girl she was, but not to be mintioned in the one year with my darlin'—in troth, it wouldn't be aisy getting such a couple as we were the same day, though it's myself that says it. Mary, dressed in a black castor hat, like a man's, a white muslin coat, with a scarlet silk handkercher about her neck, with a silver buckle and a blue ribbon, for luck, round her waist; her fine hair wasn't turned up, at all, at all, but hung down in beautiful curls on her shoulders; her eyes you would think were all light; her lips as plump and as ripe as cherries—and maybe it's myself that wasn't to that time of day without tasting them, anyhow; and her teeth, so even, and as white as a burnt bone. The day bate all for beauty; I don't know whether it was from the lightness of my own spirit it came, but I think that such a day I never saw from that to this: indeed, I thought everything was dancing and smiling about me, and sartainly every one said that such a couple hadn't been married, nor such a wedding seen in the parish, for many a long year before.

"All the time, as we went along, we had the music; but then at first we were mightily puzzled what to do with the fiddler. To put him as a hind rider, it would prevent him from playing, bekase how could he keep the fiddle before him, and another so close to him? To put him foremost was as bad, for he couldn't play and hould the bridle together; so at last my uncle proposed that he should get behind himself, turn his face to the horse's tail, and saw away like a Trojan.

"It might be about four miles or so to the priest's house, and, as the day was fine, we got on gloriously. One thing, however, became troublesome; you see there was a cursed set of ups and downs on the road, and, as the riding coutrements were so bad with a great many of the weddiners, those that had no saddles, going down steep places, would work onward bit by bit, in spite of all they could do, till they'd

[1] Charms of an evil nature.

be fairly on the horse's neck, and the women behind them would be on the animal's shoulders; and it required nice managing to balance themselves, for they might as well sit on the edge of a dale boord. Many of them got tosses this way, though it all passed in good-humour. But no two among the whole set were more puzzled by this than my uncle and the fiddler—I think I see my uncle this minute with his knees sticking into the horse's shoulders and his two hands upon his neck, keeping himself back with a *cruht*[1] upon him; and the fiddler, with his heels away towards the horse's tail, and he stretched back against my uncle—for all the world like two bricks laid against one another, and one of them falling. 'Twas the same thing going up a hill: whoever was behind would be hanging over the horse's tail, with the arm about the fore-rider's neck or body, and the other houlding the baste by the mane, to keep them both from sliding off backwards. Many a come-down there was among them—but, as I said, it was all in good-humour; and, accordingly, as regularly as they fell they were sure to get a cheer.

"When we got to the priest's house there was a hearty welcome for us all. The bride and I, with our next kindred and friends, went into the parlour; along with these there was a set of young fellows who had been bachelors of the bride's, that got in with an intention of getting the first kiss, and, in coorse, of bateing myself out of it. I got a whisper of this; so, by my song, I was determined to cut them all out in that, so well as I did in getting herself; but, you know, I couldn't be angry, even if they had got the foreway of me in it, bekase it's an old custom. While the priest was going over the business, I kept my eye about me, and, sure enough, there were seven or eight fellows all waiting to snap at her. When the ceremony drew near a close, I got up on one leg, so that I could bounce to my feet like lightning, and when it was finished I got her in my arm before you could say Jack Robinson, and swinging her behind the priest, gave her the husband's first kiss. The next minute there was a rush

[1] A hump or rather a stoop. A small harp is called a *cruit* in Irish, on account of its bend; the large straight harp being called a *clair scch.*—ED.

after her; but, as I had got the first, it was but fair that they should come in according as they could, I thought, bekase, you know, it was all in the coorse of practice: but, hould, there were two words to be said to that, for what does Father Dollard do, but shoves them off—and a fine stout shoulder he had—shoves them off, like children, and getting his arms about Mary, gives her half a dozen smacks at least—oh, consuming to the one less!—that mine was only a cracker to them. The rest, then, all kissed her, one after another, according as they could come in to get one. We then went straight to his reverence's barn, which had been cleared out for us the day before by his own directions, where we danced for an hour or two, and his reverence and his curate along with us.

"When this was over we mounted again, the fiddler taking his ould situation behind my uncle. You know it is usual, after getting the knot tied, to go to a public-house or *shebeen*, to get some refreshment after the journey; so, accordingly, we went to little lame Larry Spooney's—grandfather to him that was transported the other day for staling Bob Beaty's sheep; he was called Spooney himself, for his sheep-stealing, ever since Paddy Keenan made the song upon him, ending with 'his house never wants a good ram-horn spoon;' so that, let people say what they will, these things run in the blood—well, we went to his *shebeen* house, but the tithe of us couldn't get into it; so we sot on the green before the door, and, by my song, we took[1] decently with him, anyhow; and, only for my uncle, it's odds but we would have been all fuddled.

"It was now that I began to notish a kind of coolness between my party and the bride's, and for some time I didn't know what to make of it. I wasn't long so, however; for my uncle, who still had his eyes about him, comes over to me, and says, 'Shane, I doubt there will be bad work amongst these people, particularly betwixt the Dorans and the Flanagans—the truth is that the old business of the lawshoot will break out, and, except they're kept from drink, take my word for it, there will be blood spilled. The run-

[1] Drank.

ning for the bottle will be a good excuse,' says he, 'so I think we had better move home before they go too far in the drink.'

"Well, any way, there was truth in this; so, accordingly, the reckoning was ped, and as this was the thrate of the weddiners to the bride and bridegroom, every one of the men clubbed his share, but neither I nor the girls anything. Ha—ha—ha! Am I alive at all? I never—ha—ha—ha!—I never laughed so much in one day as I did in that, and I can't help laughing at it yet. Well, well! when we all got on the top of our horses, and sich other iligant cattle as we had—the crowning of a king was nothing to it. We were now purty well, I thank you, as to liquor; and, as the knot was tied, and all safe, there was no end to our good spirits; so, when we took the road, the men were in high blood, particularly Billy Cormick, the tailor, who had a pair of long cavaldry spurs upon him, that he was scarcely able to walk in—and he not more nor four feet high. The women, too, were in blood, having faces upon them, with the hate of the day and the liquor, as full as trumpeters.

"There was now a great jealousy among them that were bint for winning the bottle; and when one horseman would cross another, striving to have the whip hand of him when they'd set off, why, you see, his horse would get a cut of the whip itself for his pains. My uncle and I, however, did all we could to pacify them; and their own bad horsemanship, and the screeching of the women, prevented any strokes at that time. Some of them were ripping up ould sores against one another as they went along; others, particularly the youngsters, with their sweethearts behind them, coorting away for the life of them; and some might be heard miles off, singing and laughing; and you may be sure the fiddler behind my uncle wasn't idle, no more nor another. In this way we dashed on gloriously, till we came in sight of the Dumbhill, where we were to start for the bottle. And now you might see the men fixing themselves on their saddles, sacks, and *suggawns;* and the women tying kerchiefs and shawls about their caps and bonnets, to keep them from flying off, and then gripping their fore-riders hard and fast by the bosoms. When we got to the Dumbhill, there were

five or six fellows that didn't come with us to the priest's, but met us with cudgels in their hands, to prevent any of them from starting before the others, and to show fair play.

"Well, when they were all in a lump—horses, mules, *raheries*, and asses—some, as I said, with saddles, some with none, and all just as I tould you before—the word was given, and off they scoured, myself along with the rest; and divil be off me if ever I saw such another sight but itself before or since. Off they skelped through thick and thin, in a cloud of dust like a mist about us; but it was a mercy that the life wasn't trampled out of some of us, for before we had gone fifty perches the one-third of them were sprawling atop of one another on the road. As for the women, they went down right and left—sometimes bringing the horsemen with them; and many of the boys getting black eyes and bloody noses on the stones. Some of them, being half blind with the motion and the whisky, turned off, the wrong way, and galloped on, thinking they had completely distanced the crowd; and it wasn't until they cooled a bit that they found out their mistake.

"But the best sport of all was when they came to the Lazy Corner, just at Jack Gallagher's flush,[1] where the water came out a good way acrass the road; being in such a flight, they either forgot or didn't know how to turn the angle properly, and plash went above thirty of them, coming down right on the top of one another, souse in the pool. By this time there was about a dozen of the best horsemen a good distance before the rest, cutting one another up for the bottle: among these were the Dorans and Flanagans; but they, you see, wisely enough, dropped their women at the beginning, and only rode single. I myself didn't mind the bottle, but kept close to Mary, for fraid that, among sich a divil's pack of half-mad fellows, anything might happen her. At any rate, I was next the first batch; but where do you think the tailor was all this time? Why, away off like lightning, miles before them—flying like a swallow; and how he kept his sate so long has puzzled me from that day to this; but, anyhow,

[1] Flush is a pool of water that spreads nearly across a road. It is usually fed by a small mountain stream, and, in consequence of rising and falling rapidly, it is called "flush."

truth's best—there he was topping the hill ever so far before them. After all, the unlucky crathur nearly missed the bottle; for when he turned to the bride's house, instead of pulling up as he ought to do—why, to show his horsemanship to the crowd that was out looking at them, he should begin to cut up the horse right and left, until he made him take the garden ditch in full flight, landing him among the cabbages. About four yards or five from the spot where the horse lodged himself was a well, and a purty deep one too, by my word; but not a sowl present could tell what become of the tailor, until Owen Smith chanced to look into the well, and saw his long spurs just above the water; so he was pulled up in a purty pickle, not worth the washing; but what did he care? although he had a small body, the sorra one of him but had a sowl big enough for Golias or Sampson the Great.

"As soon as he got his eyes clear, right or wrong, he insisted on getting the bottle; but he was late, poor fellow, for before he got out of the garden two of them cums up—Paddy Doran and Peter Flanagan—cutting one another to pieces, and not the length of your nail between them. Well, well, that was a terrible day, sure enough. In the twinkling of an eye they were both off the horses, the blood streaming from their bare heads, struggling to take the bottle from my father, who didn't know which of them to give it to. He knew if he'd hand to one, the other would take offince, and then he was in a great puzzle, striving to razon with them; but long Paddy Doran caught it while he was spaking to Flanagan, and the next instant Flanagan measured him with a heavy loaded whip, and left him stretched upon the stones. And now the work began; for by this time the friends of both parties came up and joined them. Such knocking down, such roaring among the men, and screeching and clapping of hands and wiping of heads among the women, when a brother, or a son, or a husband would get his gruel. Indeed, out of a fair, I never saw anything to come up to it. But during all this work the busiest man among the whole set was the tailor, and, what was worse of all for the poor crathur, he should single himself out against both parties, bekase you see he thought they were cutting him out of his right to the bottle.

"They had now broken up the garden gate for weapons, all except one of the posts, and fought into the garden; when nothing should sarve Billy but to take up the large heavy post, as if he could destroy the whole faction on each side. Accordingly, he came up to big Matthew Flanagan, and was rising it just as if he'd fell him, when Matt, catching him by the nape of the neck and the waistband of the breeches, went over very quietly, and dropped him a second time, heels up, into the well, where he might have been yet, only for my mother-in-law, who dragged him out with a great deal to do, for the well was too narrow to give him room to turn.

"As for myself and all my friends, as it happened to be my own wedding, and at our own place, we couldn't take part with either of them; but we endeavoured all in our power to red [1] them, and a tough task we had of it, until we saw a pair of whips going hard and fast among them, belonging to Father Corrigan, and Father James, his curate. Well, it's wonderful how soon a priest can clear up a quarrel! In five minutes there wasn't a hand up—instead of that they were ready to run into mouse-holes.

"'What, you murderers,' says his reverence, 'are you bint to have each other's blood upon your heads, ye vile infidels, ye cursed unchristian Antherntarians? [2] are you going to get yourselves hanged like sheep-stalers? Down with your sticks I command you. Do you know—will ye give yourselves time to see whose spaking to you—you bloodthirsty set of Episcopalians? I command you, in the name of the Catholic Church and the Blessed Virgin Mary, to stop this instant, if you don't wish me,' says he, 'to turn you into stocks and stones where you stand, and make world's wonders of you as long as you live. Doran, if you rise your hand more, I'll strike it dead on your body, and to your mouth you'll never carry it while you have breath in your carcass,' says he. 'Clear off, you Flanagans, you butchers you, or by St. Dominick I'll turn the heads round upon your bodies in the twinkling of an eye, so that you'll not be able to look a quiet Christian in the face again. Pretty respect you have for the decent couple in whose house you have kicked up such a hubbub! Is this the

[1] Separate.

[2] Anti-Trinitarians.

way people are to be deprived of their dinners on your accounts, you fungaleering thieves!'

"'Why then, plase your reverence, by the—hem—I say, Father Corrigan, it wasn't my fault, but that villain Flanagan's, for he knows I fairly won the bottle—and would have distanced him, only that when I was far before him, the vagabone, he galloped acrass me on the way, thinking to thrip up the horse.'

"'You lying scoundrel,' says the priest, 'how dare you tell me a falsity,' says he, 'to my face? how could he gallop acrass you if you were far before him? Not a word more, or I'll leave you without a mouth to your face, which will be a double share of provision and bacon saved anyway. And Flanagan, you were as much to blame as he, and must be chastised for your raggamuffinly conduct,' says he; 'and so must you both, and all your party, particularly you and he, as the ringleaders. Right well I know it's the grudge upon the lawsuit you had, and not the bottle, that occasioned it; but, by St. Peter, to Lough Derg both of you must tramp for this.'

"'Ay, and by St. Pether, they both desarve it as well as a thief does the gallows,' said a little blustering voice belonging to the tailor, who came forward in a terrible passion, looking for all the world like a drowned rat. 'Ho, by St. Pether, they do, the vagabones; for it was myself that won the bottle, your reverence; and, by this and by that,' says he, 'the bottle I'll have, or some of their crowns will crack for it: blood or whisky I'll have, your reverence, and I hope that you'll assist me.'

"'Why, Billy, are you here?' says Father Corrigan, smiling down upon the figure the fellow cut, with his long spurs and his big whip. 'What in the world tempted *you* to get on horseback, Billy?'

"'By the powers, I was miles before them,' says Billy, 'and after this day, your reverence, let no man say that I couldn't ride a steeplechase across Crocknagooran.'

"'Why, Billy, how did you stick on at all, at all?' says his reverence.

"'How do I know how I stuck on,' says Billy, 'nor whether I stuck on at all or not; all I know is, that I was on horse-

back before leaving the Dumbhill, and that I found them pulling me by the heels out of the well in the corner of the garden, and that, your reverence, when the first was only topping the hill there below, as Lanty Magowran tells me, who was looking on.'

"'Well, Billy,' says Father Corrigan, 'you must get the bottle; and as for you Dorans and Flanagans, I'll make examples of you for this day's work—that you may reckon on. You are a disgrace to the parish, and, what's more, a disgrace to your priest. How can luck or grace attind the marriage of any young couple that there's such work at? Before you leave this, you must all shake hands, and promise never to quarrel with each other while grass grows or water runs; and if you don't, by the blessed St. Dominick, I'll exkimnicate ye both, and all belonging to you into the bargain; so that ye'll be the pitiful examples and shows to all that look upon you.'

"'Well, well, your reverence,' says my father-in-law, 'let all bygones be bygones; and, please God, they will before they go be better friends than ever they were. Go now and clane yourselves, take the blood from about your faces, for the dinner's ready an hour agone; but if you all respect the place you're in, you'll show it, in regard of the young crathurs that's going, in the name of God, to face the world together, and, of coorse, wishes that this day at laste should pass in pace and quietness: little did I think there was any friend or neighbour here that would make so little of the place or people as was done for nothing at all, in the face of the country.'

"'God He sees,' says my mother-in-law, 'that there's them here this day we didn't desarve this from, to rise such a norration, as if the house was a *shebeen* or a public-house! It's myself didn't think either me or my poor *colleen* here, not to mention the dacent people she's joined to, would be made so little of as to have our place turned into a play-acthur—for a play-acthur couldn't be worse.'

"'Well,' says my uncle, 'there's no help for spilt milk, I tell you, nor for spilt blood either: tare-an-ounty, sure, we're all Irishmen, relations, and Catholics through other, and we oughtn't to be this way. Come away to dinner—by the

powers, we'll duck the first man that says a loud word for the remainder of the day. Come, Father Corrigan, and carve the goose, or the geese, for us—for, by my *sannies,* I bleeve there's a baker's dozen of them; but we've plenty of Latin for them, and your reverence and Father James here understands that langidge, anyhow—larned enough there, I think, gintlemen.'

"'That's right, Brian,' shouts the tailor—'that's right; there must be no fighting: by the powers, the first man that attempts it, I'll brain him—fell him to the earth like an ox, if all belonging to him was in my way.'

"This threat from the tailor went farther, I think, in putting them into good-humour nor even what the priest said. They then washed and claned themselves, and accordingly went to their dinners. Billy himself marched with his terrible whip in his hand, and his long cavalry spurs sticking near ten inches behind him, draggled to the tail like a bantling cock after a shower. But maybe there was more draggled tails and bloody noses nor poor Billy's, or even nor was occasioned by the fight; for, after Father Corrigan had come, several of them dodged up, some with broken shins and heads, and wet clothes, that they'd got on the way by the mischances of the race, particularly at the flush. But I don't know how it was—somehow the people in them days didn't value these things a straw. They were far hardier then nor they are now, and never went to law at all, at all. Why, I've often known skulls to be broken, and the people to die afterwards, and there would be nothing more about it, except to break another skull or two for it; but neither crowner's quest, nor judge, nor jury was ever troubled at all about it. And so signs on it, people were then innocent, and not up to law and counsellors as they are now. If a person happened to be killed in a fight, at a fair or market, why, he had only to appear after his death to one of his friends, and get a number of masses offered up for his sowl, and all was right; but now the times are clane altered, and there's nothing but hanging and transporting for such things, although that won't bring the people to life again."

"I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "you had a famous dinner, Shane?"

"'Tis you that may say that, Mr. Morrow," replied Shane. "But the house, you see, wasn't able to hould one-half of us; so there was a dozen or two tables borrowed from the neighbours, and laid one after another in two rows, on the green, beside the river that ran along the garden hedge, side by side. At one end Father Corrigan sat, with Mary and myself, and Father James at the other. There were three five-gallon kegs of whisky, and I ordered my brother to take charge of them, and there he sat beside them, and filled the bottles as they were wanted, bekase, if he had left that job to strangers, many a *spalpeen* there would make away with lots of it. *Mavrone,* such a sight as the dinner was! I didn't lay my eye on the fellow of it since, sure enough, and I'm now an ould man, though I was then a young one. Why, there was a pudding boiled in the end of a sack; and, troth, it was a thumper, only for the straws—for, you see, when they were making it, they had to draw long straws acrass in order to keep it from falling asunder: a fine plan it is, too. Jack M'Kenna, the carpenther, carved it with a hand-saw, and if he didn't curse the same straws, I'm not here. 'Draw them out, Jack,' said Father Corrigan—'draw them out. It's asy known, Jack, you never ate a polite dinner, you poor awkward *spalpeen,* or you'd have pulled out the straws the first thing you did, man alive.' Such lashins of corned beef, and rounds of beef, and legs of mutton, and bacon—turkeys, and geese, and barn-door fowls, young and fat. They may talk as they will, but commend me to a piece of good ould bacon, ate with crock butther, and phaties, and cabbage. Sure enough, they leathered away at everything, but this and the pudding were the favourites. Father Corrigan gave up the carving in less than no time, for it would take him half a day to sarve them all, and he wanted to provide for number one. After helping himself, he set my uncle to it, and maybe he didn't slash away right and left. There was half a dozen *gorsoons* carrying about the beer in cans, with froth upon it like barm—but that was beer in arnest, Nancy—I'll say no more.

"When the dinner was over, you would think there was as much left as would sarve a regiment; and, sure enough, a right hungry ragged regiment was there to take care of it;

though, to tell the truth, there was as much taken into Finigan's as would be sure to give us all a rousing supper. Why, there was such a troop of beggars—men, women, and childher—sitting over on the sunny side of the ditch, as would make short work of the whole dinner had they got it. Along with Father Corrigan and me was my father and mother, and Mary's parents; my uncle, cousins, and nearest relations on both sides. Oh, it's Father Corrigan—God rest his sowl, he's now in glory, and so he was then, also—how he did crow and laugh! 'Well, Matthew Finigan,' says he, 'I can't say but I'm happy that your *colleen bawn* here has lit upon a husband that's no discredit to the family—and it is herself didn't drive her pigs to a bad market,' says he. 'Why, in troth, Father, *avourneen*,' says my mother-in-law, 'they'd be hard to plase that couldn't be satisfied with them she got; not saying but she had her pick and choice of many a good offer, and might have got richer matches; but Shane Fadh M'Cawell, although you're sitting there beside my daughter, I'm prouder to see you on my own flure, the husband of my child, nor if she'd got a man with four times your substance.'

"'Never heed the girls for knowing where to choose,' says his reverence, slyly enough; 'but, upon my word—only she gave us all the slip—to tell the truth, I had another husband than Shane in my eye for her, and that was my own nevvy, Father James's brother here.'

"'And I'd be proud of the connection,' says my father-in-law; 'but, you see, these girls won't look much to what you or I'll say, in choosing a husband for themselves. How-and-iver, not making little of your nevvy, Father Michael, I say he's not to be compared with that same *bouchal* sitting beside Mary there.' 'No, nor by the powdhers-o'-war, never will,' says Billy Cormick the tailor, who had come over and slipped in on the other side, betune Father Corrigan and the bride—'by the powdhers-o'-war, he'll never be fit to be compared with me, I tell you, till yesterday comes back again.'

"'Why, Billy,' says the priest, 'you're in every place.' 'But where I ought to be!' says Billy; 'and that's hard and fast tackled to Mary Bane, the bride here, instead of that steeple of a fellow she has got,' says the little cock.

"'Billy, I thought you were married,' said Father Corrigan.

"'Not I, your reverence,' says Billy; 'but I'll soon do something, Father Michael—I have been threatened this long time, but I'll do it at last.'

"'He's not exactly married, sir,' says my uncle; 'there's a *colleen* present' (looking at the bridesmaid) 'that will soon have his name upon her.'

"'Very good, Billy,' says the priest; 'I hope you will give us a rousing wedding—equal, at least, to Shane Fadh's.'

"'Why, then, your reverence, except I get such a darling as Molly Bane here—and, by this and by that, it's you that *is* the darling, Molly *asthore*—what come over me, at all, at all, that I didn't think of you,' says the little man, drawing closer to her, and poor Mary smiling good-naturedly at his spirit.

"'Well, and what if you did get such a darling as Molly Bane there?' says his reverence.

"'Why, except I get the likes of her for a wife—upon second thoughts, I don't like marriage, anyway,' said Billy, winking against the priest—'I'll lade such a life as your reverence; and, by the powdhers, it's a thousand pities that I wasn't made into a priest instead of a tailor. For, you see, if I had,' says he, giving a verse of an old song—

'For, you see, if I had,
It's I'd be the lad
That would show all my people such larnin';
And when they'd go wrong,
Why, instead of a song,
I'd give them a lump of a sarmin.'

"'Billy,' says my father-in-law, 'why don't you make a hearty dinner, man alive? Go back to your sate and finish your male—you're aiting nothing to signify.'

"'Me!' says Billy—'why, I'd scorn to ate a hearty dinner; and I'd have you to know, Matt Finigan, that it wasn't for the sake of your dinner I came here, but in regard to your family, and bekase I wished him well that's sitting beside your daughter; and it ill becomes your father's son to cast up your dinner in my face, or any one of my family; but a blessed minute longer I'll not stay among you. Give me

your hand, Shane Fadh, and you, Mary—may goodness grant you peace and happiness every night and day you both rise out of your beds.—I made that coat your husband has on his back beside you, and a betther fit was never made; but I didn't think it would come to my turn to have my dinner cast up this a-way, as if I was aiting it for charity.'

"'Hut, Billy,' says I, 'sure, it was all out of kindness; he didn't mean to offind you.'

"'It's no matter,' says Billy, beginning to cry, 'he did offind me; and it's low days with me to bear an affront from him or the likes of him; but, by the powdhers-o'-war,' says he, getting into a great rage, 'I won't bear it—only, as you're an old man yourself, I'll not rise my hand to you; but let any man now that has the heart to take up your quarrel come out and stand before me on the sod here.'

"Well, by this time, you'd tie all that were present with three straws, to see Billy stripping himself, and his two wrists not thicker than drumsticks. While the tailor was raging, for he was pretty well up with what he had taken, another person made his appearance at the far end of the *boreen* that led to the green where we sot. He was mounted upon the top of a sack that was upon the top of a sober-looking baste enough, God knows; he jogging along at his ase, his legs dangling down from the sack on each side, and the long skirts of his coat hanging down behind him. Billy was now getting pacified bekase they gave way to him a little; so the fun went round, and they sang, roared, danced, and coorted right and left.

"When the stranger came as far as the skirt of the green, he turned the horse over quite nathural to the wedding; and, sure enough, when he jogged up, it was Friar Rooney himself, with a sack of oats, for he had been questin.[1] Well, sure, the ould people couldn't do less nor all go over to put the *failtah* on him. 'Why, then,' says my father- and mother-in-law, ''tis yourself, Friar Rooney, that's as welcome as the flowers of May; and see who's here before you—Father Corrigan and Father Dollard.'

[1] Questin—When an Irish priest or friar collects corn or money from the people in a gratuitous manner the act is called "questin."

"'Thank you, thank you, Molshy—thank you, Matthew—troth, I know that 'tis I am welcome.'

"'Ay, and you're welcome again, Father Rooney,' said my father, going down and shaking hands with him, 'and I'm proud to see you here. Sit down, your reverence—here's everything that's good, and plinty of it, and if you don't make much of yourself never say an ill fellow dealt with you.'

"The friar stood while my father was speaking, with a pleasant, contented face upon him, only a little roguish and droll.

"'Hah! Shane Fadh,' says he, smiling drily at me, 'you did them all, I see. You have her there, the flower of the parish, blooming beside you; but I knew as much six months ago, ever since I saw you bid her good-night at the hawthorn. Who looked back so often, Mary, eh? Ay, laugh and blush—do—throth, 'twas I that caught you, but you didn't see me, though. Well, *a colleen*, and if you did, too, you needn't be ashamed of your bargain, anyhow. You see, the way I came to persave yees that evening was this—but I'll tell it by-and-by. In the manetime,' says he, sitting down, and attacking a fine piece of cornbeef and greens, 'I'll take care of a certain acquaintance of mine,' says he. 'How are you, reverend gintlemen of the Secularity. You'll permit a poor friar to sit and ate his dinner in your presence, I humbly hope.'

"'Frank,' says Father Corrigan, 'lay your hand upon your conscience, or upon your stomach, which is the same thing, and tell us honestly, how many dinners you eat on your travels among my parishioners this day.'

"'As I'm a sinner, Michael, this is the only thing to be called a dinner I eat this day. Shane Fadh—Mary, both your healths, and God grant you all kinds of luck and happiness, both here and hereafter! All your healths in gineral—gintlemen seculars!'

"'Thank you, Frank,' said Father Corrigan; 'how did you speed to-day?'

"'How can any man speed that comes after you?' says the friar. 'I'm after travelling the half of the parish for that poor bag of oats that you see standing against the ditch.'

"'In other words, Frank,' says the priest, 'you took Althadhawan in your way, and in about half a dozen houses

filled your sack, and then turned your horse's head towards the good cheer, by way of accident only.'

"'And was it by way of accident, Mr. Secular, that I got you and that iloquent young gintleman, your curate, here before me? Do you feel that, man of the world? Father James, your health, though—you're a good young man as far as saying nothing goes; but it's better to sit still than rise up and fall, so I commend you for your discration,' says he; 'but I'm afeard your master there won't make you much fitter for the kingdom of heaven, anyhow.'

"'I believe, Father Corrigan,' says my uncle, who loved to see the priest and the friar at it, 'that you've met with your match—I think Father Rooney's able for you.'

"'Oh, sure,' says Father Corrigan, 'he was joker to the college of the Sorebones[1] in Paris; he got as much education as enabled him to say mass in Latin, and to beg oats in English, for his jokes.'

"'Troth, and,' says the friar, 'if you were to get your larning on the same terms, you'd be guilty of very little knowledge; why, Michael, I never knew you to attempt a joke but once, and I was near shedding tears, there was something very sorrowful in it.'

"This brought the laugh against the priest. 'Your health, Molshy,' says he, winking at my mother-in-law, and then giving my uncle, who sat beside him, a nudge. 'I believe, Brian, I'm giving it to him.' ''Tis yourself that is,' says my uncle; 'give him a wipe or two more.' 'Wait till he answers the last,' says the friar.

"'He's always joking,' says Father James, 'when he thinks he'll make anything by it.'

"'Ay!' says the friar, 'then God help you both if you were left to your jokes for your feeding; for a poorer pair of gentlemen wouldn't be found in Christendom.'

"'And I believe,' says Father Corrigan, 'if you depinded for your feeding upon your divinity instead of your jokes, you'd be as poor as a man in the last stage of a consumption.'

"This threw the laugh against the friar, who smiled himself; but he was a dry man that never laughed much.

[1] The Sorbonne is, of course, meant.—ED.

"'Sure,' says the friar, who was never at a loss, 'I have yourself and your nephew for examples that it's possible to live and be well fed without divinity.'

"'At any rate,' says my uncle, putting in his tongue, 'I think you're both very well able to make divinity a joke betune you,' says he.

"'Well done, Brian,' says the friar, 'and so they are, for I believe it is the only subject they can joke upon; and I beg your pardon, Michael, for not excepting it before; on that subject I allow you to be humoursome.'

"'If that be the case, then,' says Father Corrigan, 'I must give up your company, Frank, in order to avoid the force of bad example; for you're so much in the habit of joking on everything else that you're not able to except even divinity.'

"'You may aisily give me up,' says the friar, 'but how will you be able to forget Father Corrigan? I'm afeard you will find his acquaintance as great a detriment to yourself as it is to others in that respect.'

"'What makes you say,' says Father James, who was more in arnest than the rest, 'that my uncle won't make me fit for the kingdom of heaven?'

"'I had a pair of rasons for it, Jemmy,' says the friar: 'one is, that he doesn't understand the subject himself; and another is, that you haven't capacity for it, even if he did. You've a want of nathural parts—a whackuum here,' pointing to his forehead.

"'I beg your pardon, Frank,' says Father James, 'I deny your premises, and I'll now argue in Latin with you, if you wish, upon any subject you please.'

"'Come, then,' says the friar—'*Kid-eat-ivy mare-eat-hay.*'

"'Kid—what?' says the other.

"'*Kid-eat-ivy mare-eat-hay,*' answers the friar.

"'I don't know what you're at,' says Father James; 'but I'll argue in Latin with you as long as you wish.'

"'Tut, man,' says Father Rooney, 'Latin's for schoolboys; but come, now, I'll take you in another language—I'll try you in Greek—*In-mud-eel-is in-clay-none-is in-fir-tar-is in-oak-none-is.*'

"The curate looked at him, amazed, not knowing what answer to make; at last says he, 'I don't profess to know

Greek, bekase I never larned it; but stick to the Latin, and I'm not afeard of you.'

"'Well, then,' says the friar, 'I'll give you a trial at that —*Afflat te canis ter—Forte dux fel flat in guther.*'

"'A flat-tay-cannisther—Forty ducks fell flat in the gutther!' says Father James—'why, that's English!'

"'English!' says the friar; 'oh, good-bye to you, Mr. Secular; if that's your knowledge of Latin, you're an honour to your tachers and to your cloth.'

"Father Corrigan now laughed heartily at the puzzling the friar gave Father James. 'James,' says he, 'never heed him, he's only pesthering you with bog-Latin; but, at any rate, to do him justice, he's not a bad scholar, I can tell you that. . . . Your health, Frank, you droll crathur—your health. I have only one fault to find with you, and that is, that you fast and mortify yourself too much. Your fasting has reduced you from being formerly a friar of very genteel dimensions to a cut of corpulency that smacks strongly of penance—fifteen stone at least.'

"'Why,' says the friar, looking down, quite plased entirely, at the cut of his own waist, which, among ourselves, was no trifle, and giving a growl of a laugh—the most he ever gave, 'if what you pray here benefits you in the next life as much as what I fast does me in this, it will be well for the world in general, Michael.'

"'How can you say, Frank,' says Father James, 'with such a carkage as that, that you're a poor friar? Upon my credit, when you die, I think the angels will have a job of it in wafting you upwards.'

"'Jemmy, man, was it you that said it!—why, my light's beginning to shine upon you, or you never could have got out so much,' says Father Rooney, putting his hands over his brows and looking up toardst him. 'But if you ever read scripthur, which I suppose you're not overburdened with, you would know that it says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," but not blessed are the poor in flesh—now, mine is spiritual poverty.'

"'Very true, Frank,' says Father Corrigan; 'I believe there's a great dearth and poverty of spirituality about you, sure enough. But of all kinds of poverty, commend me to a friar's. Voluntary poverty's something, but it's the divil

entirely for a man to be poor against his will. You friars boast of this voluntary poverty; but if there's a fat bit in any part of the parish, we, that are the lawful clargy, can't eat it, but you're sure to drop in, just in the nick of time, with your voluntary poverty.'

"'I'm sure, if we do,' says the friar, 'it's nothing out of your pocket, Michael. I declare, I believe you begrudge us the air we breathe. But don't you know very well that our ordhers are apostolic, and that, of coorse, we have a more primitive appearance than you have.'

"'No such thing,' says the other; 'you, and the parsons, and the fat bishops are too far from the right place—the only difference between you is that you are fat and lazy by toleration, whereas the others are fat and lazy by authority. You are fat and lazy on your ould horses, jogging about from house to house, and stuffing yourselves either at the table of other people's parishioners, or in your own convents in Dublin and elsewhere. They are rich, bloated gluttons, going about in their coaches, and wallying in wealth. Now, *we* are the golden mean, Frank, that live upon a little, and work hard for it. But, plase God, the day will come when we will step into their places, and be as we used to be.'

"'Why, you cormorant,' says the friar, a little nettled, for the dhrop was beginning to get up into his head—'sure, if we're fat by toleration, we're only tolerably fat, my worthy secular; but how can you condemn them, when you only want to get into their places, or have the face to tax any one with living upon the people?'

"'You see,' says the friar, in a whisper to my uncle, 'how I sobered them in the larning, and they are good scholars for all that, but not near so deep read as myself.—Michael,' says he, 'now that I think on it—sure, I'm to be at Denis O'Flaherty's "Month's Mind"[1] on Thursday next.'

"'Indeed, I would not doubt you,' says Father Corrigan. 'You wouldn't be apt to miss it.'

"'Why, the widdy Flaherty asked me yesterday, and I think that's proof enough that I'm not going unsent for.'

[1] In Ireland a mass said for a person the month after his or her decease is called a "Month's Mind."—ED.

"By this time the company was hard and fast at the punch, the songs, and the dancing. The dinner had been cleared off, except what was before the friar, who held out wonderfully, and the beggars and *shulers* were clawing and scoulding one another about the divide. The dacentest of us went into the house for a while, taking the fiddler with us, and the rest stayed on the green to dance, where they were soon joined by lots of the counthry people, so that in a short time there was a large number entirely. After sitting for some time within, Mary and I began, you may be sure, to get unasy, sitting palavering among a parcel of ould sober folks; so, at last, out we slipped, and the few other dacent young people that were with us, to join the dance, and shake our toe along with the rest of them. When we made our appearance the flure was instantly cleared for us, and then she and I danced the 'Humours of Glin.'

"Well, it's no matter—it's all past now, and she lies low; but I may say that it wasn't very often danced in better style since, I'd wager.—Lord bless us—what a drame the world is!—The darling of my heart you war, *avourneen machree.* I think I see her with the modest smile upon her face straight, and fair, and beautiful, and—hem—and when the dance was over, how she stood leaning upon me, and my heart within melting to her, and the look she'd give into my eyes and my heart, too, as much as to say, this is the happy day with me; and the blush still would fly acrass her face, when I'd press her, unknownst to the bystanders, aginst my beating heart. *A suilish machree,* she is now gone from me—and lies low, and it all appears like a drame to me; but—hem—God's will be done!—sure she's happy!—och, och!

"Many a shake hands did I get from the neighbours' sons, wishing me joy—and I'm sure I couldn't do less than thrate them to a glass, you know; and 'twas the same way with Mary—many a neighbour's daughter that she didn't do more nor know by eyesight, maybe, would come up and wish her happiness in the same manner, and she would say to me, 'Shane, *avourneen,* that's such a man's daughter—they're dacent friendly people, and we can't do less nor give her a glass.' I, of coorse, would go down and bring them over, after a little pulling—making, you see, as if they

wouldn't come—to where my brother was handing out the native.

"In this way we passed the time till the evening came on, except that Mary and the bridesmaid were sent for to dance with the priests, who were within at the punch, in all their glory—Friar Rooney along with them, as jolly as a prince. I and my man, on seeing this, were for staying with the company; but my mother, who 'twas that came for them, says, 'Never mind the boys, Shane; come in with the girls, I say. You're just wanted at the present time, both of you; follow me for an hour or two, till their reverences within have a bit of a dance with the girls in the back room—we don't want to gather a crowd about them.' Well, we went in, sure enough, for a while; but, I don't know how it was, I didn't at all feel comfortable with the priests—for, you see, I'd rather sport my day with the boys and girls upon the green; so I gives Jack the hard word,[1] and in we went, when, behold you, there was Father Corrigan planted upon the side of a settle, Mary along with him, both waiting till they'd have a fling of a dance together; whilst the curate was capering on the flure before the bridesmaid, who was a purty dark-haired girl, to the tune of 'Kiss my lady;' and the friar planted between my mother and mother-in-law, one of his legs stretched out on a chair, he singing some funny song or other that brought the tears to their eyes with laughing.

"Whilst Father James was dancing with the bridesmaid, I gave Mary the wink to come away from Father Corrigan, wishing, as I tould you, to get out amongst the youngsters once more; and Mary herself, to tell the truth, although he was the priest, was very willing to do so. I went over to her, and says, 'Mary, *asthore*, there's a friend without that wishes to spake to you.'

"'Well,' says Father Corrigan, 'tell that friend that she's better employed, and that they must wait, whoever they are. I'm giving your wife, Shane,' says he, 'a little good advice that she won't be the worse for, and she can't go now.'

"Mary, in the meantime, had got up, and was coming away,

[1] A pass-word, sign, or brief intimation, touching something of which a man is ignorant, that he may act accordingly.

when his reverence wanted her to stay till they'd finish their dance. 'Father Corrigan,' says she, 'let me go now, sir, if you plase, for they would think it bad threatment of me not to go out to them.'

"'Troth, and you'll do no such thing, *acushla*,' says he, spaking so sweet to her; 'let them come in if they want you. Shane,' says his reverence, winking at me, and spaking in a whisper, 'stay here, you and the girls, till we take a hate at the dancing—don't you know that the ould women here and me will have to talk over some things about the fortune; you'll maybe get more nor you expect. Here, Molshy,' says he to my mother-in-law, 'don't let the youngsters out of this.'

"'*Musha*, Shane, *ahagur*,' says the ould woman, "why will yees go and lave the place; sure, you needn't be dashed before them—they'll dance themselves.'

"Accordingly we stayed in the room; but just on the word, Mary gives one spring away, laving his reverence by himself on the settle. 'Come away,' says she, 'lave them there, and let us go to where I can have a dance with yourself, Shane.'

"Well, I always loved Mary, but at that minute, if it would save her, I think I could spill my heart's blood for her. 'Mary,' says I, full to the throat, 'Mary, *acushla agus asthore machree*, I could lose my life for you.'

"She looked in my face, and the tears came into her eyes. 'Shane, *achora*,' says she, 'amn't I your happy girl, at last?' She was leaning over against my breast; and what answer do you think I made?—I pressed her to my heart: I did more—I took off my hat, and, looking up to God, I thanked Him with tears in my eyes for giving me such a treasure. 'Well, come now,' says she, 'to the green; so we went—and it's she that was the girl, when she did go among them, that threw them all into the dark for beauty and figure: as fair as a lily itself did she look—so tall and illegant that you wouldn't think she was a farmer's daughter at all. So we left the priests dancing away, for we could do no good before them.

"When we had danced an hour or so, them that the family had the greatest regard for were brought in, unknownst to the rest, to drink tay. Mary planted herself beside me, and

would sit nowhere else; but the friar got beside the bridesmaid, and I surely obsarved that many a time she'd look over, likely to split, at Mary, and it's Mary herself that gave her many's a wink to come to the other side; but, you know, out of manners, she was obliged to sit quietly—though, among ourselves, it's she that was like a hen on a hot griddle, beside the ould chap. It was now that the bride's cake was got. Ould Sonsy Mary marched over, and putting the bride on her feet, got up on a chair and broke the cake over her head, giving round a fadge[1] of it to every young person in the house, and they again to their acquaintances; but, lo and behold you, who should insist on getting a whang of it but the friar, which he rolled up in a piece of paper, and put it in his pocket. 'I'll have good fun,' says he, 'dividing this to-morrow among the *colleens* when I'm collecting my oats—the sorra one of me but 'ill make them give me the worth of it of something, if it was only a fat hen or a square of bacon.' After tay the ould folk got full of talk; the youngsters danced round them; the friar sung like a thrush, and told many a droll story. The tailor had got drunk a little too early, and had to be put to bed, but he was now as fresh as ever, and able to dance a hornpipe, which he did on a door. The Dorans and the Flanagans had got quite thick after drubbing one another—Ned Doran began his coortship with Alley Flanagan on that day, and they were married soon after, so that the two factions joined, and never had another battle until the day of her berrial, when they were at it as fresh as ever. Several of those that were at the wedding were lying drunk about the ditches, or roaring, and swaggering, and singing about the place. The night falling, those that were dancing on the green removed to the barn. Father Corrigan and Father James weren't ill off; but as for the friar, although he was as pleasant as a lark, there was hardly any such thing as making him tipsy. Father Corrigan wanted him to dance. 'What!' says he, 'would you have me to bring on an earthquake, Michael?—but who ever heard of a follower of St. Domnick, bound by his vow to voluntary poverty and mortifications—young couple, your health—will anybody tell me

[1] A liberal portion—a wedge.

who mixed this, for they've knowledge worth a folio of the fathers?—poverty and mortifieations going to shake his heel? By the bones of St. Domniek, I'd desarve to be suspinded if I did. Will no one tell me who mixed this, I say, for they had a jewel of a hand at it? Oeh—

"Let parsons prache and pray—
Let priests, too, pray and prache, sir;
What's the rason they
Don't practise what they tache, sir?
Forral, orrall, loll
Forral, orrall, laddy."

Sho da slainthah ma collenee agus ma bouchalee. Hoigh, oigh, oigh—healths all, gintlemen seculars! Molshy,' says the friar to my mother-in-law, 'send that *bocaun* to bed—poor fellow, he's almost off—rouse yourself, James!—it's aisy to see that he's but young at it yet—that's right—he's sound asleep—just toss him into bed, and in an hour or so he'll be as fresh as a daisy.

"Let parsons prache and pray—
Forral, orrall, loll——"'

"'For dear's sake, Father Rooney,' says my unele, running in, in a great hurry, 'keep yourself quiet a little: here's the Squire and Master Franeis coming over to fulfil their promise; he would have come up airlier, he says, but that he was away all day at the "sizes."'

"'Very well,' says the friar, 'let him come—who's afeard—mind yourself, Michael.'

"In a minute or two they came in, and we all rose up, of coorse, to welcome them. The Squire shuek hands with the ould people, and afterwards with Mary and myself, wishing us all happiness—then with the two clergymen, and introduced Master Frank to them; and the friar made the young chap sit beside him. The masther then took a sate himself, and looked on, while they were dancing, with a smile of good-humour on his face—while they, all the time, would give new touches and trebles, to show off all their steps before him. He was landlord both to my father and father-in-law; and it's he that was the good man, and the gintleman, every ineh of him. They may all talk as they will, but eommend

me, Mr. Morrow, to one of the old squires of former times for a landlord. The priests, with all their larning, were nothing to him for good breeding—he appeared so free, and so much at his ase, and even so respectful, that I don't think there was one in the house but would put their two hands under his feet to do him a sarvice.

"When he sat a while, my mother-in-law came over with a glass of nice punch that she had mixed, at laste equal to what the friar praised so well, and making a low curtshy, begged pardon for using such freedom with his honour, but hoped that he would just taste a little to the happiness of the young couple. He then drank our healths, and shuck hands with us both a second time, saying—although I can't, at all, at all, give it in anything like his own words—'I am glad,' says he to Mary's parents, 'that your daughter has made such a good choice'—throth, he did—the Lord be merciful to his sowl—God forgive me for what I was going to say, and he a Protestant; but if ever one of yees went to heaven, Mr. Morrow, he did—'such a prudent choice; and I congr—con—grathulate you,' says he to my father, 'on your connection with so industrious and respectable a family. You are now beginning the world for yourselves,' says he to Mary and me, 'and I cannot propose a better example to you both than that of your respective parents. From this forrid,' says he, 'I'm to considher you my tenants; and I wish to take this opportunity of informing you both that, should you act up to the opinion I entertain of you, by an attentive coorse of industry and good management, you will find in me an encouraging and indulgent landlord. I know, Shane,' says he to me, smiling, a little knowingly enough too, 'that you have been a little wild or so, but that's past, I trust. You have now serious duties to perform, which you cannot neglect —but you will not neglect them; and be assured, I say again, that I shall feel pleasure in rendhering you every assistance in my power in the cultiwation and improvement of your farm.' 'Go over, both of you,' says my father, 'and thank his honour, and promise to do everything he says.' Accordingly, we did so; I made my scrape as well as I could, and Mary blushed to the eyes and dropped her curtshy.

"'Ah!' says the friar, 'see what it is to have a good

landlord and a Christian gintleman to dale with. If I know your character, Squire Whitethorn, I believe you're not the man that would put a Protestant tenant over the head of a Catholic one. I trust, sir, we shall meet in a better place than this—both Protestant and Catholic.'

"'I am happy, sir,' says the Squire, 'to hear such principles from a man who I thought was bound by his creed to hould different opinions.'

"'Ah, sir!' says the friar, 'you little know who you're talking to if you think so. I happened to be collecting a taste of oats, with the permission of my friend, Doctor Corrigan here, for I'm but a poor friar, sir, and dropped in by mere accident; but you know the hospitality of our country, Squire; and that's enough—go they would not allow me, and I was mintioning to this young gintleman, your son, how we collected the oats, and he insisted on my calling—a generous, noble child! I hope, sir, you have got proper instructors for him?'

"'Yes,' said the Squire; 'I'm taking care of that point.'

"'What do you think, sir, but he insists on my calling over to-morrow, that he may give me his share of oats, as I told him that I was a friar, and that he was a little parishioner of mine; but I added that that wasn't right of him, without his papa's consint.'

"'Well, sir,' says the Squire, 'as he has promised, I will support him; so, if you'll ride over to-morrow, you shall have a sack of oats—at all events, I shall send you a sack in the coorse of the day.'

"'I humbly thank you, sir,' says Father Rooney; 'and I thank my noble little parishioner for his ginerosity to the poor ould friar. God mark you to grace, my dear; and, wherever you go, take the ould man's blessing along with you.'

"They then bid us good-night, and we all rose and saw them to the door.

"Father Corrigan now appeared to be getting sleepy. While this was going on, I looked about me, but couldn't see Mary. The tailor was just beginning to get a little hearty once more. Supper was talked of, but there was no one that could ate anything; even the friar was against it. The clergy now got their horses; the friar laving his oats

behind him, for we promised to send them home, and something more along with them the next day. Father James was roused up, but could hardly stir with a heddick.[1] Father Corrigan was correct enough; but when the friar got up he ran a little to the one side, upsetting Sonsy Mary, that sot a little beyond him. He then called over my mother-in-law to the dresser, and after some *collogin* she slipped two fat fowl, that had never been touched, into one of his coat pockets, that was big enough to hould a leg of mutton. My father then called me over, and said, 'Shane,' says he, 'hadn't you better slip Father Rooney a bottle or two of that whisky; there's plenty of it there that wasn't touched, and you won't be a bit the poorer of it, maybe, this day twelve months.' I accordingly dhropped two bottles of it into the other pocket, for his reverence wanted a balance, anyhow.

"'Now,' says he, 'before I go, kneel down both of you, till I give you my benediction.'

"We accordingly knelt down, and he gave us his blessing in Latin—my father standing at his shoulder to keep him steady.

"After they went, Mary threw the stocking—all the unmarried folks coming in the dark to see who it would hit. Bless my sowl, but she was the droll Mary—for what did she do, only put a big brogue of her father's into it, that was near two pounds weight; and who should it hit on the bare sconce but Billy Cormick, the tailor—who thought he was fairly shot, for it levelled the crathur at once; though that wasn't hard to do, anyhow.

"This was the last ceremony; and Billy was well contínted to get the knock, for you all know whoever the stocking strikes upon is to be married first. After this my mother and mother-in-law set them to the dancing—and 'twas themselves that kept it up till long after daylight the next morning—but first they called me into the next room where Mary was. And—and so ends my wedding—by the same token that I'm as dry as a stick."

"Come, Nancy," says Andy Morrow, "replenish again for

[1] Headache.

us all, with a double measure for Shane Fadh, because he well desarves it."

"Why, Shane," observed Alick, "you must have a terrible fine memory of your own, or you couldn't tell it all so exact."

"There's not a man in the four provinces has sich a memory," replied Shane. "I never hard a story yet, but I could repate it in fifty years afterwards. I could walk up any town in the kingdom, and let me look at the signs, and I would give them to you agin jist exactly as they stood."

Thus ended the account of Shane Fadh's wedding; and, after finishing the porter, they all returned home, with an understanding that they were to meet the next night in the same place.

LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE

THE succeeding evening found them all assembled about Ned's fireside in the usual manner; where M'Roarkin, after a wheezy fit of coughing and a draught of Nancy's porter, commenced to give them an account of LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.

We have observed before that M'Roarkin was desperately asthmatic, a circumstance which he felt to be rather an unpleasant impediment to the indulgence either of his mirth or sorrow. Every chuckle at his own jokes ended in a disastrous fit of coughing; and, when he became pathetic, his sorrow was most ungraciously dissipated by the same cause: two facts which were highly relished by his audience.

"Larry M'Farland, when a young man, was considhered the best labourer within a great ways of him; and no servant man in the parish got within five shillings a quarter of his wages. Often and often, when his time would be near out, he'd have offers, from the rich farmers and gintlemen about him, of higher terms; so that he was seldom with one masther more nor a year at the very most. He could handle a flail with e'er a man that ever stepped in black leather; and at spade work there wasn't his equal. Indeed, he had a brain for everything: he could thatch better nor many that airned their bread by it; could make a slide car, straddle, or any other rough carpenter's work, that it would surprise you to think of it; could work a *kish* or side *creels* beautifully; mow as much as any two men, and go down a ridge of corn almost as fast as you could walk; was a great hand at ditching or draining meadows and bogs; but, above all things, he was famous for building hay-ricks and corn-stacks; and when Squire Farmer used to enter for the prize at the yearly ploughing-match he was sure to borrow the loan of Larry from whatever master he happened to be working with. And well he might; for the year out of four that he hadn't Larry

he lost the prize; and every one knew that if Larry had been at the tail of his plough they would have had a tighter job of it in beating him.

"Larry was a light, airy young man, that knew his own value; and was proud enough, God knows, of what he could do. He was, indeed, too much up to sport and divarsion, and never knew his own mind for a week. It was against him that he never stayed long in one place; for, when he got a house of his own afterwards, he had no one that cared anything in particular about him. Whenever any man would hire him, he'd take care to have Easter and Whiss'n Mondays to himself, and one or two of the Christmas *maragah-mores*.[1] He was also a great dancer, fond of the dhrop—and used to dress above his station; going about with a shop-cloth coat, cassimere small-clothes, and a Caroline hat; so that you would little think he was a poor sarvant man, labouring for his wages. One way or other, the money never sted long with him; but he had light spirits, depended entirely on his good hands, and cared very little about the world, provided he could take his own fling out of it.

"In this way he went on from year to year, changing from one master to another; every man that would employ him thinking he might get him to stop with him for a constancy. But it was all useless: he'd be off after half a year, or sometimes a year at the most, for he was fond of roving; and that man would never give himself any trouble about him afterwards; though, maybe, if he had continted himself with him, and been sober and careful, he would be willing to assist and befriend him when he might stand in need of assistance.

"It's an ould proverb, that 'birds of a feather flock together,' and Larry was a good proof of this. There was in the same neighbourhood a young woman named Sally Lowry, who was just the other end of himself, for a pair of good hands, a love of dress and of dances. She was well-looking, too, and knew it; light and showy, but a tight and clane sarvant anyway. Larry and she, in short, began to coort, and were pulling a coard together for as good as five or six years. Sally, like Larry, always made a bargain when hiring to have the holly-

[1] Big markets.

days to herself; and on these occasions she and Larry would meet and sport their figure; going off with themselves, as soon as mass would be over, into Ballymavourneen, where he would collect a pack of fellows about him, and she a set of her own friends; and there they'd sit down and drink for the length of the day, laving themselves without a penny of whatever little airning the dress left behind it, for Larry was never right except when he was giving a thrate to some one or other.

"After corrousing away till evening, they'd then set off to a dance; and, when they'd stay there till it would be late, he should see her home, of coorse never parting till they'd settle upon meeting another day.

"At last they got fairly tired of this, and resolved to take one another for better or worse. Indeed, they would have done this long ago, only that they could never get as much together as would pay the priest. How-and-ever, Larry spoke to his brother, who was a sober, industrious boy, that had laid by his *scollops* for the windy day,[1] and tould him that Sally Lowry and himself were going to yoke for life. Tom was a well-hearted, friendly lad, and thinking that Sally, who bore a good name for being such a clane sarvant, would make a good wife, he lent Larry two guineas, which, along with two more that Sally's aunt, who had no children of her own, gave her, enabled them to 'over' their difficulties and get married.

"Shortly after this, his brother Tom followed his example; but, as he had saved something, he made up to Val Slevin's daughter, that had a fortune of twenty guineas, a cow and a heifer, with two good chaff beds and bedding.

"Soon after Tom's marriage, he comes to Larry one day, and says, 'Larry, you and I are now going to face the world; we're both young, healthy, and willing to work—so are our wives; and it's bad if we can't make out bread for ourselves, I think.'

"'True for you, Tom,' says Larry, 'and what's to hinder us? I only wish we had a farm, and you'd see we'd take

[1] In Irish the proverb is, "*Ha nahn la na guiha la na scuilipagh;*" that is, the windy or stormy day is not that on which the scollops should be cut. Scollops are osier twigs sharpened at both ends, and inserted in the thatch, to bind it at the eve and rigging.

good bread out of it: for my part, there's not another *he* in the country I'd turn my back upon for managing a farm, if I had one.'

"'Well,' says the other, 'that's what I wanted to overhaul as we're together; Squire Dickson's steward was telling me yesterday, as I was coming up from my father-in-law's, that his master has a farm of fourteen acres to set at the present time—the one the Nultys held, that went last spring to America—'twould be a dacent little take between us.'

"'I know every inch of it,' says Larry, 'and good, strong land it is, but it was never well wrought; the Nultys weren't fit for it at all; for one of them didn't know how to folly a plough. I'd engage to make that land turn out as good crops as e'er a farm within ten miles of it.'

"'I know that, Larry,' says Tom, 'and Squire Dickson knows that no man could handle it to more advantage. Now, if you join me in it, whatever means I have will be as much yours as mine: there's two snug houses under the one roof, with outhouses and all, in good repair; and if Sally and Biddy will pull manfully along with us, I don't see, with the help of Almighty God, why we shouldn't get on decently, and soon be well and comfortable to live.'

"'Comfortable!' says Larry; 'no, but wealthy itself, Tom: and let us *at* it at wanst; Squire Dickson knows what I can do as well as any man in Europe, and, I'll engage, won't be hard upon us for the first year or two. Our best plan is to go to-morrow, for fraid some other might get the foreway of us.'

"The Squire knew very well that two better boys weren't to be met with than the same M'Farlands, in the way of knowing how to manage land; and although he had his doubts as to Larry's light and careless ways, yet he had good depindance out of the brother, and thought, on the whole, that they might do very well together. Accordingly, he set them the farm at a reasonable rint, and in a short time they were both living on it, with their two wives. They divided the fourteen acres into aqual parts; and for fraid there would be any grumbling between them about better or worse, Tom proposed that they should draw lots, which was agreed to by Larry; but, indeed, there was very little difference in the

two halves, for Tom took care, by the way he divided them, that none of them should have any reason to complain. From the time they wint to live upon their farms, Tom was up early and down late, improving it—paid attention to nothing else; axed every man's opinion as to what crop would be best for such a spot, and, to tell the truth, he found very few, if any, able to instruct him so well as his own brother Larry. He was no such labourer, however, as Larry; but what he was short in he made up by perseverance and care.

"In the coorse of two or three years you would hardly bleeve how he got on, and his wife was every bit equal to him. She spun the yarn for the linen that made their own shirts and sheeting, bought an odd pound of wool now and then when she could get it chape, and put it past till she had a stone or so; she would then sit down and spin it—get it wove and dressed; and before one would know anything about it she'd have the making of a dacent comfortable coat for Tom, and a bit of heather-coloured drugget for her own gown, along with a piece of striped red and blue for a petticoat—all at very little cost.

"It wasn't so with Larry. In the beginning, to be sure, while the fit was on him, he did very well; only that he would go of an odd time to a dance; or of a market or fair day, when he'd see the people pass by, dressed in their best clothes, he'd take the notion, and set off with himself, telling Sally that he'd just go in for a couple of hours to see how the markets were going on.

"It's always an unpleasant thing for a body to go to a fair or market without anything in their pocket; accordingly, if money was in the house, he'd take some of it with him, for fraid that any friend or acquaintance might thrate him, and then it would be a poor, mane-spirited thing to take another man's thrate without giving one for it. He'd seldom have any notion, though, of breaking in upon or spinding the money; he only brought it to keep his pocket, jist to prevent him from being shamed, should he meet a friend.

"In the manetime, Sally, in his absence, would find herself lonely, and, as she hadn't, maybe, seen her aunt for some time before, she'd lock the door, and go over to spind a while with her, or to take a trip as far as her ould mistress's place to

see the family. Many a thing people will have to say to one another about the pleasant times they had together, or several other subjects best known to themselves, of coorse. Larry would come home in her absence, and finding the door locked, would slip down to Squire Dickson's, to chat with the steward or gardiner, or with the sarvants in the kitchen.

"You all remimber Tom Hance, that kept the public-house at Tullyvernon cross-roads, a little above the Squire's —at laste, most of you do—and ould Wilty Rutledge, the piper, that spint his time between Tom's and the big house —God be good to Wilty!—it's himself was the droll man entirely; he died of aiting boiled banes, for a wager that the Squire laid on him agin ould Captain Flint, and dhrinking porter after them, till he was swelled like a ton—but the Squire berrid him at his own expense. Well, Larry's haunt, on finding Sally out when he came home, was either the Squire's kitchen, or Tom Hance's; and, as he was the 'broth of a boy' at dancing, the sarvants, when he'd go down, would send for Wilty to Hance's, if he didn't happen to be with themselves at the time, and strike up a dance in the kitchen; and, along with all, maybe Larry would have a sup in his head.

"When Sally would come home, in her turn, she'd not find Larry before her; but Larry's custom was to go into Tom's wife, and say, 'Biddy, tell Sally, when she comes home, that I'm gone down a while to the big house (or to Tom Hance's, as it might be), but I'll not be long.' Sally, after waiting a while, would put on her cloak, and slip down to see what was keeping him. Of coorse, when finding the sport going on, and carrying a light heel at the dance herself, she'd throw off the cloak, and take a hand at it along with the rest. Larry and she would then go their ways home, find the fire out, light a sod of turf in Tom's, and feeling their own place very cowld and naked after the blazing comfortable fire they had left behind them, go to bed, both in very middling spirits entirely.

"Larry at other times would quit his work early in the evening, to go down towards the Squire's, bekase he had only to begin work earlier the next day to make it up. He'd meet the Squire himself, maybe, and, after putting his hand

to his hat, and getting a 'How do you do, Larry?' from his honour, enter into discoorse with him about his honour's plan of stacking his corn. Now, Larry was famous at this.

"'Who's to build your stacks this sason, your honour?'

"'Tim Dillon, Larry.'

"'Is it he, your honour?—he knows as much about building a stack of corn as Masther George here. He'll only botch them, sir, if you let him go about them.'

"'Yes; but what can I do, Larry?—he's the only man I have that I could trust them to.'

"'Then it's your honour needn't say that, anyhow; for, rather than see them spoiled, I'd come down myself and put them up for you.'

"'Oh, I couldn't expect that, Larry.'

"'Why then, I'll do it, your honour; and you may expect me down in the morning at six o'clock, plase God.'

"Larry would keep his word, though his own corn was drop-ripe; and having once undertaken the job, he couldn't give it up till he'd finish it off dacently. In the manetime his own crop would go to destruction; sometimes a windy day would come, and not leave him every tenth grain; he'd then get some one to cut it down for him—he had to go to the big house, to build the master's corn; he was then all bustle—a great man entirely—there was none such—would be up with the first light, ordering and commanding, and directing the Squire's labourers, as if he was the king of the castle. Maybe, 'tis after he'd come from the big house, that he'd collect a few of the neighbours, and get a couple of cars and horses from the Squire, you see, to bring home his own oats to the hagyard with moonlight, after the dews would begin to fall; and in a week afterwards every stack would be heated, and all in a reek of froth and smoke. It's not asy to do anything in a hurry, and especially it's not asy to build a corn-stack after night, when a man cannot see how it goes on; so 'twas no wonder if Larry's stacks were supporting one another the next day—one laning north and another south.

"But along with this, Larry and Sally were great people for going to the dances that Hance used to have at the crass-roads, bekase he wished to put money into his own pockets;

and if a neighbour died they were sure to be the first at the wake house—for Sally was a great hand at washing down a corpse—and they would be the last home from the berril; for, you know, they couldn't but be axed in to the dhrinking after the friends would lave the churchyard, to take a sup to raise their spirits and drown sorrow, for grief is always drouthy.

"When the races, too, would come, they would be sure not to miss them; and if you'd go into a tint, it's odds but you'd find them among a knot of acquaintances, dhrinking and dancing, as if the world was no trouble to them. They were, indeed, the best nathured couple in Europe; they would lend you a spade or a hook in potato time or harvest, out of pure kindness, though their own corn that was drop-ripe should be uncut, or their potatoes that were a-tramping every day with their own cows, or those of the neighbours, should be undug—all for fraid of being thought unneighbourly.

"In this way they went on for some years, not altogether so bad but that they were able just to keep the house over their heads. They had a small family of three children on their hands, and every likelihood of having enough of them. Whenever they got a young one christened, they'd be sure to have a whole lot of the neighbours at it; and surely some of the young ladies, or Master George, or John, or Frederick, from the big house, should stand gossip, and have the child called after them. They then should have tay enough to sarve them, and loaf-bread and punch; and, though Larry should sell a sack of seed oats or seed potatoes to get it, no doubt but there should be a bottle of wine to thrate the young ladies or gintlemen.

"When their children grew up, little care was taken of them, bekase their parents minded other people's business more nor their own. They were always in the greatest poverty and distress; for Larry would be killing time about the Squire's, or doing some handy job for a neighbour who could get no other man to do it. They now fell behind entirely in the rint, and Larry got many hints from the Squire, that if he didn't pay more attention to his business he must look after his arrears, or as much of it as he could make up from the cattle and the crop. Larry promised well, as far

as words went, and, no doubt, hoped to be able to perform; but he hadn't steadiness to go through with a thing. Thruth's best—you see, both himself and his wife neglected their business in the beginning, so that everything went at sixes and sevens. They then found themselves uncomfortable at their own hearth, and had no heart to labour; so that what would make a careful person work their fingers to the stumps to get out of poverty, only prevented them from working at all, or druv them to work for those that had more comfort, and could give them a better male's mate.

"Their tempers, now, soon began to get sour. Larry thought, bekase Sally wasn't as careful as she ought to be, that if he had taken any other young woman to be his wife he wouldn't be as he was; she thought the very same thing of Larry. 'If he was like another,' she would say to his brother, 'that would be up airly and late at his own business, I would have spirits to work, by rason it would cheer my heart to see our little farm looking as warm and comfortable as another's; but, *fareer gairh*, that's not the case, nor likely to be so, for he spinds his time from one place to another, working for them that laughs at him for his pains; but he'd rather go to his neck in wather than lay down a hand for himself, except when he can't help it.'

"Larry, again, had his complaint. 'Sally's a lazy trollop,' he would say to his brother's wife, 'that never does one hand's turn that she can help, but sits over the fire from morning till night, making birds' nests in the ashes with her yallow heels, or going about from one neighbour's house to another, *gosthering* and palavering about what doesn't consarn her, instead of minding the house. How can I have heart to work, when I come in, expecting to find my dinner boiled, but, instead of that, get her sitting upon her hunkers on the hearth-stone, blowing at two or three green sticks with her apron, the pot hanging on the crook, without even the "white horses"[1] on it. She never puts a stitch in my clothes, nor in the childher's

[1] The white horses are large bubbles produced by the extrication of air, which rises in white bubbles to the surface when the potatoes are beginning to boil; so that when the first symptoms of boiling commence, it is a usual phrase to say, the "white horses" are on the pot, sometimes the "white friars."

clothes, nor in her own, but lets them go to rags at once—the divil's luck to her! I wish I had never met with her, or that I had married a sober girl, that wasn't fond of dress and dancing. If she was a good sarvant, it was only bekase she liked to have a good name; for, when she got a house and place of her own, see how she turned out.'

"From less to more, they went on squabbling and fighting, until at last you might see Sally one time with a black eye or a cut head, or another time going off with herself, crying, up to Tom Hance's or some other neighbour's house, to sit down and give a history of the ruction that he and she had on the head of some thrifle or another that wasn't worth naming. Their childher were shows, running about without a single stitch upon them, except ould coats that some of the sarvants from the big house would throw them. In these they'd go sailing about, with the long skirts trailing on the ground behind them; and sometimes Larry himself would be mane enough to take the coat from the *gorsoon* and wear it himself. As for giving them any schooling, 'twas what they never thought of; but, even if they were inclined to it, there was no school in the neighbourhood to send them to.

"It's a thrue saying, that as the ould cock crows, the young one larns; and this was thrue here, for the childher fought one another like so many divils, and swore like Trojans —Larry, along with everything else, when he was a *Brine-oge* thought it was a manly thing to be a great swearer; and the childher, when they got able to swear, warn't worse nor their father. At first, when any of the little souls would thry at an oath, Larry would break his heart laughing at them; and so, from one thing to another, they got quite hardened in it, without being any way checked in wickedness. Things at last drew on to a bad state entirely. Larry and Sally were now as ragged as Dives and Lazarus, and their childher the same. It was no strange sight in summer to see the young ones marching about the street as bare as my hand, with scarce a blessed stitch upon them that ever was seen, they dirt and ashes to the eyes, waddling after their uncle Tom's geese and ducks, through the green dub of rotten water that lay before their own door, just beside the dunghill; or the bigger ones running after the Squire's labourers, when bring-

ing home the corn or the hay, wanting to get a ride as they went back with the empty cars.

"Larry and Sally would never be let into the Squire's kitchen now, to eat or drink, or spend an evening with the sarvants; he might go out and in to his meal's mate along with the rest of the labourers, but there was no *grah* for him. Sally would go down with her jug to get some buttermilk, and have to stand among a set of beggars and cotters, she as ragged and as poor as any of them; for she wouldn't be let into the kitchen till her turn came, no more nor another, for the sarvants would turn up their noses with the greatest disdain possible at them both.

"It is hard to tell whether the inside or the outside of their house was worse. Within, it would almost turn your stomach to look at it—the flure was all dirt, for how could it be any other way when at the end of every male the *scrahag*[1] would be emptied down on it, and the pigs that were whining and grunting about the door would break into the hape of praty-skins that Sally would there throw down for them. You might reel Larry's shirt, or make a surveyor's chain of it; for, bad cess to me, but I bleeve it would reach from this to the rath. The blanket was in tatthers, and, like the shirt, would go round the house; their straw beds were stocked with the 'black militia;' the childher's heads were garrisoned with 'Scotch greys,' and their heels and heads ornamented with all description of kives. There wor only two stools in all the house, and a hassock of straw for the young child, and one of the stools wanted a leg, so that it was dangerous for a stranger to sit down upon it, except he knew of this failing. The flure was worn into large holes, that were mostly filled with slop, where the childher used to dabble about, and amuse themselves by sailing eggshells upon them, with bits of boiled praties in them, by way of a little faste. The dresser was as black as dirt could make it, and had on it only two or three wooden dishes, clasped with tin, and noggins without hoops, a 'beetle,' and some crockery. There was an ould chest to hold their male, but it wanted the hinges; and the

[1] A flat wicker basket, off which the potatoes are eaten.

childher, when they'd get the mother out, would mix a sup of male and wather in a noggin, and stuff themselves with it, raw and all, for they were almost starved.

"Then, as the byre had never been kept in repair, the roof fell in, and the cow and pig had to stand in one end of the dwelling-house; and, except Larry did it, whatever dirt the same cow and pig, and the childher to the back of that, were the occasion of, might stand there till Saturday night, when, for dacency's sake, Sally herself would take a shovel, and out with it upon the hape that was beside the dub before the door. If a wet day came, there wasn't a spot you could stand in for down-rain; and, wet or dry, Sally, Larry, and the childher were spotted like trouts with the soot-dhrops, made by the damp of the roof and the smoke. The house on the outside was all in ridges of black dirt, where the thatch had rotted, or covered over with chicken-weed or blind oats; but in the middle of all this misery they had a horseshoe nailed over the door-head for good luck.

"You know that, in telling this story, I needn't mintion everything just as it happened, laying down year after year, or day and date; so you may suppose, as I go on, that all this went forward in the coorse of time. They didn't get bad of a sudden, but by degrees, neglecting one thing after another, until they found themselves in the state I'm relating to you—then struggling and struggling, but never taking the right way to mend.

"But where's the use in saying much more about it?—things couldn't stand—they were terribly in arrears; but the landlord was a good kind of man, and, for the sake of the poor childher, didn't wish to turn them on the wide world, without house or shelter, bit or sup. Larry, too, had been, and still was, so ready to do difficult and nice jobs for him, and would resave no payment, that he couldn't think of taking his only cow from him, or prevent him from raising a bit of oats or a plat of potatoes every year out of the farm. The farm itself was all run to waste by this time, and had a miserable look about it—sometimes you might see a piece of a field that had been ploughed, all overgrown with grass, because it had never been sowed or set with

anything. The slaps were all broken down, or had only a piece of an ould beam, a thorn-bush, or crazy car lying acrass, to keep the cattle out of them. His bit of corn was all eat away and cropped here and there by the cows, and his potatoes rooted up by the pigs. The garden, indeed, had a few cabbages and a ridge of early potatoes, but these were so choked with burdocks and nettles that you could hardly see them.

"I tould you before that they led the divil's life, and that was nothing but God's truth; and according as they got into greater poverty it was worse. A day couldn't pass without a fight; if they'd be at their breakfast, maybe he'd make a potato hop off her skull, and she'd give him the contents of her noggin of buttermilk about the eyes; then he'd flake her, and the childher would be in an uproar, crying out, 'Oh, daddy, daddy, don't kill my mammy!' When this would be over, he'd go off with himself to do something for the Squire, and would sing and laugh so pleasant that you'd think he was the best tempered man alive; and so he was, until neglecting his business, and minding dances, and fairs, and drink, destroyed him.

"It's the maxim of the world, that when a man is down, down with him; but when a man goes down through his own fault he finds very little mercy from any one. Larry might go to fifty fairs before he'd meet any one now to thrate him; instead of that, when he'd make up to them, they'd turn away, or give him the cowld shoulder. But that wouldn't satisfy him; for if he went to buy a slip of a pig or a pair of *brogues,* and met an ould acquaintance that had got well to do in the world, he should bring him in, and give him a dram, merely to let the other see that he was still able to do it; then, when they'd sit down, one dram would bring on another from Larry, till the price of the pig or the brogues would be spint, and he'd go home again as he came, sure to have another battle with Sally.

"In this way things went on, when, one day that Larry was preparing to sell some oats, a son of Nicholas Roe Sheridan's of the Broad-bog came into him. 'Good-morning, Larry,' says he. 'Good-morrow kindly, Art,' says Larry; 'how are you, *ma bouchal?*'

"'Why, I've no rason to complain, thank God, and you,' says the other; 'how is yourself?'

"'Well, thank you, Art; how is the family?'

"'Faix, all stout, except my father, that has got a touch of the toothach. When did you hear from the Slevins?'

"'Sally was down on Thursday last, and they're all well, your sowl.'

"'Where's Sally now?'

"'She's just gone down to the big house for a pitcher of buttermilk; our cow won't calve these three weeks to come, and she gets a sup of kitchen for the childher till then. Won't you take a sate, Art? but you had better have a care for yourself, for that stool wants a leg.'

"'I didn't care she was within, for I brought a sup of my own stuff in my pocket,' said Art.

"'Here, Hurrish (he was called Horatio afther one of the Square's sons), fly down to the Square's, and see what's keeping your mother; the divil's no match for her at staying out with herself, wanst she's from under the roof.'

"'Let Dick go,' says the little fellow, 'he's betther able to go nor I am; he has got a coat on him.'

"'Go yourself, when I bid you,' says the father.

"'Let him go,' says Hurrish; 'you have no right to bid me to go, when he has a coat upon him; you promised to ax one for me from Masther Francis, and you didn't do it, so the divil a toe I'll budge to-day,' says he, getting betune the father and the door.

"'Well, wait,' says Larry, 'faix, only the strange man's to the fore, and I don't like to raise a hubbub, I'd pay you for making me such an answer. Dick, *agra*, will you run down, like a good *bouchal*, to the big house, and tell your mother to come home, that there's a strange man here wants her?'

"'Twas Hurrish you bid,' says Dick—'and make *him*. That's the way he always thrates you, and does nothing that you bid him.'

"'But you know, Dick,' says the father, 'that he hasn't a stitch to his back, and the crathur doesn't like to go out in the cowld and he so naked.'

"'Well, you bid him go,' says Dick, 'and let him; the sorra a yard I'll go—the skin-burnt *spalpeen*, that's always

the way with him; whatever he's bid to do, he throws it on me, bekase, indeed, he has no coat; but he'll folly Masther Thomas or Masther Francis through sleet and snow up the mountains when they're fowling or tracing; he doesn't care about a coat then.'

"'Hurrish, you must go down for your mother when I bid you,' says the weak man, turning again to the other boy.

"'I'll not,' says the little fellow; 'send Dick.'

"Larry said no more, but laying down the child he had in his hands upon the flure, makes at him; the lad, however, had the door of him, and was off beyant his reach like a shot. He then turned into the house, and meeting Dick, felled him with a blow of his fist at the dresser. 'Tundher-an-ages, Larry,' says Art, 'what has come over you at all, at all—to knock down the *gorsoon* with such a blow? Couldn't you take a rod or a switch to him? *Dher mauim*, man, but I bleeve you've killed him outright,' says he, lifting the boy, and striving to bring him to life. Just at this minnit Sally came in.

"'Arrah, sweet bad-luck to you, you lazy vagabond you,' says Larry, 'what kept you away till this hour?'

"'The divil send you news, you nager you,' says Sally; 'what kept me—could I make the people churn sooner than they wished or were ready?'

"'Ho, by my song, I'll flake you as soon as the dacent young man leaves the house,' says Larry to her, aside.

"'You'll flake me, is it?' says Sally, speaking out loud—'in troth, that's no new thing for you to do, anyhow.'

"'Spake asy, you had betther.' 'No, in troth, won't I spake asy; I've spoken asy too long, Larry, but the divil a taste of me will bear what I've suffered from you any longer, you mane-spirited blackguard you; for he is nothing else that would rise his hand to a woman, especially to one in my condition,' and she put her gown tail to her eyes. When she came in, Art turned his back to her, for fraid she'd see the state the *gorsoon* was in; but now she noticed it. 'Oh, murdher, murdher!' says she, clapping her hands, and running over to him, 'what has happened my child? Oh, murdher, murdher! this is your work, murdherer!' says she to Larry. 'Oh, you villain, are you bent on murdhering all of us—are you bent on destroying us out o' the face? Oh, *wurrah*

sthrew! wurrah sthrew! what'll become of us! Dick, *agra,*' says she, crying, 'Dick, *acushla ma chree,* don't you hear me spaking to you?—don't you hear your poor broken-hearted mother spaking to you? Oh, *wurrah! wurrah!* amn't I the heart-brokenest crathur that's alive this day, to see the likes of such doings! but I knew it would come to this! My sowl to glory, but my child's murthered by that man standing there!—by his own father—his own father! Which of us will you murther next, you villain?'

"'For heaven's sake, Sally,' says Art, 'don't exaggerate him more nor he is; the boy is only stunned—see, he's coming to. Dick, *ma bouchal,* rouse yourself—that's a man—but he's well enough—that's it, *alanna*—there, take a *slug* out of this bottle, and it'll set all right—or, stop, have you a glass within, Sally?' 'Och, musha, not a glass is under the roof wid me,' says Sally; 'the last we had was broke the night Barney was christened, and we hadn't one since—but I'll get you an egg-shell.'[1] 'It'll do as well as the best,' says Art. And to make a long story short, they sat down, and drank the bottle of whisky among them. Larry and Sally made it up, and were as great friends as ever; and Dick was made drunk for the bating he got from his father.

"What Art wanted was to buy some oats that Larry had to sell, to run in a private still, up in the mountains, of coorse, where every still is kept. Sure enough, Larry sould him the oats, and was to bring them up to the still-house the next night after dark. According to appointment, Art came a short time after nightfall, with two or three young boys along with him. The corn was sacked and put on the horses; but before that was done they had a dhrop, for Art's pocket and the bottle were old acquaintances. They all then sat down in Larry's, or, at laste, as many as there were seats for, and fell to it. Larry, however, seemed to be in better humour this night, and more affectionate with Sally and the childher: he'd often look at them, and appear to feel as if something

[1] The ready wit of the Irish is astonishing. It often happens that they have whisky when neither glasses nor cups are at hand—in which case they are never at a loss. I have seen them use not only eggshells, but pistol-barrels, tobacco-boxes, and scooped potatoes, in extreme cases.

was over him; but no one observed that till afterwards. Sally herself seemed kinder to him, and even went over and sat beside him on the stool, and putting her arm about his neck, kissed him in a joking way, wishing to make up, too, for what Art saw the night before—poor thing—but still as if it wasn't all a joke, for at times she looked sorrowful. Larry, too, got his arm about her, and looked often and often on her and the childher, in a way that he wasn't used to do, until the tears fairly came into his eyes.

"'Sally, *avourneen*,' says he, looking at her, 'I saw you when you had another look from what you have this night; when it wasn't asy to follow you in the parish or out of it;' and when he said this he could hardly spake.

"'Whisht, Larry, *acushla*,' says she, 'don't be spaking that-away—sure, we may do very well yet, plase God. I know, Larry, there was a great dale of it—maybe, indeed, it was all—my fault; for I wasn't to you, in the way of care and kindness, what I ought to be.'

"'Well, well, *aroon*,' says Larry, 'say no more; you might have been all that, only it was my fault. But where's Dick, that I struck so terribly last night? Dick, come over to me, *agra*—come over, Dick, and sit down here beside me. *Arrah*, here, Art, *ma bouchal*, will you fill this eggshell for him? Poor *gorsoon!* God knows, Dick, you get far from fair play, *acushla*—far from the ating and drinking that other people's childher get, that hasn't as good a skin to put it in as you, *alanna!* Kiss me, Dick, *acushla*—and God knows your face is pale, and that's not with good feeding, anyhow: Dick, *agra*, I'm sorry for what I done to you last night; forgive your father, Dick, for I think that my heart's breaking, *acushla*, and that you won't have me long with you.'

"Poor Dick, who was naturally a warm-hearted, affectionate *gorsoon*, kissed his father, and cried bitterly. Sally herself, seeing Larry so sorry for what he had done, sobbed as if she would drop on the spot; but the rest began, and, betwixt scowlding and cheering him up, all was as well as ever. Still Larry seemed as if there was something entirely very strange the matter with him; for, as he was going out, he kissed all the childher, one after another; and even went over to the young baby that was asleep in the little cradle of boords,

that he himself had made for it, and kissed it two or three times, aisily, for fraid of wakening it. He then met Sally at the door, and catching her hand when none of the rest saw him, squeezed it, and gave her a kiss, saying, 'Sally, darling!' says he.

"'What ails you, Larry, *asthore*?' says Sally.

"'I don't know,' says he, 'nothing, I bleeve—but, Sally, *acushla*, I have trated you badly all along; I forgot, *avourneen*, how I loved you *once*, and now it breaks my heart that I have used you so ill.' 'Larry,' she answered, 'don't be talking that-a-way, bekase you make me sorrowful and unasy—don't, *acushla*: God above me knows I forgive you it all. Don't stay long,' says she, 'and I'll borry a lock of meal from Biddy, till we get home our own *meldhre*,[1] and I'll have a dish of stirabout ready to make for you when you come home. Sure, Larry, who'd forgive you if I, your own wife, wouldn't? But it's I that wants it from you, Larry, and in the presence of God and ourselves I now beg your pardon, and ax your forgiveness for all the sin I done to you.' She dropped on her knees, and cried bitterly; but he raised her up, himself a-choking at the time, and, as the poor crathur got to her feet, she laid herself on his breast, and sobbed out, for she couldn't help it. They then went away, though Larry, to tell the truth, wouldn't have gone with them at all, only that the sacks were borried from his brother, and he had to bring them home, in regard of Tom wanting them the very next day.

"The night was as dark as pitch, so dark, faiks, that they had to get long pieces of bog fir, which they lit, and held in their hands, like the lights that Ned there says the lamp-lighters have in Dublin to light the lamps with.

"At last, with a good dale of trouble, they got to the still-house; and, as they had all taken a drop before, you may be sure they were better inclined to take another sup now. They accordingly sat down about the fine rousing fire that was under the still, and had a right good jorum of strong whisky that never seen a drop of water. They all were in

[1] Any quantity of meal ground on one occasion, a kiln cast, or as much as the kiln will dry at once.

very good spirits, not thinking of to-morrow, and caring at the time very little about the world as it went.

"When the night was far advanced, they thought of moving home; however, by that time they weren't able to stand. But it's one curse of being drunk, that a man doesn't know what he's about for the time, except some few like that poaching ould fellow, Billy M'Kinney, that's as cunning when he's drunk as when he's sober; otherwise they would not have ventured out in the clouds of the night, when it was so dark and severe, and they in such a state.

"At last they staggered away together, for their road lay for a good distance in the same direction. The others got on, and reached home as well as they could; but although Sally borried the dish of male from her sister-in-law, to have a warm pot of stirabout for Larry, and sat up till the night was more than half gone, waiting for him, yet no Larry made his appearance. The childher, too, all sat up, hoping he'd come home before they'd fall asleep and miss the supper; at last the crathurs, after running about, began to get sleepy, and one head would fall this-a-way and another that-a-way; so Sally thought it hard to let them go without getting their share, and accordingly she put down the pot on a bright fire, and made a good lot of stirabout for them, covering up Larry's share in a red earthen dish before the fire.

"This roused them a little, and they sat about the hearth with their mother, keeping her company with their little chat, till their father would come back.

"The night, for some time before this, got very stormy entirely. The wind ris, and the rain fell as if it came out of methers.[1] The house was very cowld, and the door was bad; for the wind came in very strong under the foot of it, where the ducks and hens, and the pig when it was little, used to squeeze themselves in, when the family was absent, or afther they went to bed. The wind now came whistling under it; and the ould hat and rags that stopped up the windies were blown out half a dozen times with such force that the ashes were carried away almost from the hearth. Sally got very low-spirited on hearing the storm whistling so sorrow-

[1] An old Irish drinking-vessel.

fully through the house, for she was afeard that Larry might be out on the dark moors under it; and how any living soul could bear it, she didn't know. The talk of the childher, too, made her worse; for they were debating among themselves, the crathurs, about what he had better do under the tempest —whether he ought to take the sheltry side of a hillock, or get into a long heath bush, or under the ledge of a rock or tree, if he could meet such a thing.

"In the manetime, terrible blasts would come over and through the house, making the ribs crack so, that you would think the roof would be taken away at wanst. The fire was now getting low, and Sally had no more turf in the house; so that the childher crouched closer and closer about it— their poor hungry-looking pale faces made paler with fear that the house might come down upon them, or be stripped, and their father from home—and with worse fear that something might happen him under such a tempest of wind and rain as it blew. Indeed, it was a pitiful sight to see the ragged crathurs drawing in a ring nearer and nearer the dying fire; and their poor, naked, half-starved mother sitting with her youngest infant lying between her knees and her breast; for the bed was too cowld to put it into it without being kept warm by the heat of them that it used to sleep with."

"Musha, God help her and them," says Ned, "I wish they were here beside me on this comfortable hob, this minnit; I'd fight Nancy to get a fogmeal for them, anyway—a body can't but pity them, afther all!"

"You'd fight Nancy!" said Nancy herself—"maybe Nancy would be as willing to do something for the crathurs as you would. I like everybody that's able to pay for what they get; but we ought to have some bowels in us for all that. You'd fight Nancy, indeed!"

"Well," continued the narrator, "there they sat, with cowld and fear in their pale faces, shivering over the remains of the fire, for it was now nearly out, and thinking, as the deadly blast would drive through the creeking ould door and the half-stuffed windies, of what their father would do under such a terrible night. Poor Sally, sad and sorrowful, was thinking of all their ould quarrels, and taking the blame all to herself for not being more attentive to her business and

more kind to Larry; and when she thought of the way she thrated him, and the ill tongue she used to give him, the tears began to roll from her eyes, and she rocked herself from side to side, sobbing as if her heart would break. When the childher saw her wiping her eyes with the corner of the little handkerchief that she had about her neck, they began to cry along with her. At last she thought, as it was now so late, that it would be folly to sit up any longer; she hoped, too, that he might have thought of going into some neighbour's house on his way, to take shelter; and with these thoughts she raked the *greeshaugh* over the fire, and after putting the childher in their little straw nest, and spreading their own rags over them, she and the young one went to bed, although she couldn't sleep at all, at all, for thinking of Larry.

"There she lay, trembling under the light cover of the bed-clothes, listening to the dreadful night in it, so lonely that the very noise of the cow, in the other corner, chewing her cud, in the silence of a short calm, was a great relief to her. It was a long time before she could get a wink of sleep, for there was some uncommon weight upon her that she couldn't account for by any chance; but after she had been lying for about half an hour she heard something that almost fairly knocked her up. It was the voice of a woman, crying and wailing in the greatest distress, as if all belonging to her were under-boord.[1]

When Sally heard it first, she thought it was nothing but the whistling of the wind; but it soon came again, more sorrowful than before, and, as the storm rose, it rose upon the blast along with it, so strange and mournfully, that she never before heard the like of it. 'The Lord be about us,' says she to herself, 'what can that be at all!—or who is it? for it's not Nelly,' maning her sister-in-law. Again she listened, and there it was, sobbing and sighing in the greatest grief, and she thought she heard it louder than ever, only that this time it seemed to name whomever it was lamenting. Sally now got up and put her ear to the door, to *see* if she could *hear*

[1] This phrase alludes to the manner in which the dead bodies in several parts of Ireland are laid out, *viz.*, under a long deal board, over which is spread a clean sheet, so that no part of the corpse is visible. It is much more becoming than the other manner, in which the countenance of the dead is exposed to view.

what it said. At this time the wind got calmer, and the voice also got lower; but, although it was still sorrowful, she never heard any living Christian's voice so sweet, and, what was very odd, it fell in fits, exactly as the storm sunk, and rose as it blew louder.

"When she put her ear to the chink of the door she heard the words repeated, no doubt of it, only she couldn't be quite sure, as they weren't very plain; but, as far as she could make any sense out of them, she thought that it said, 'Oh, Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!' Sally's hair stood on end when she heard this; but, on listening again, she thought it was her own name instead of Larry's that it repated. Still she wasn't sure, for the words weren't plain, and all she could think was that they resembled her own name or Larry's more nor any other words she knew. At last, as the wind fell again, it melted away, weeping most sorrowfully, but so sweetly that the likes of it was never heard. Sally then went to bed, and the poor woman was so harished with one thing or another that at last she fell asleep."

"'Twas the *Banshee*," says Shane Fadh.

"Indeed, it was nothing else than that same," replied M'Roarkin.

"I wonder Sally didn't think of that," said Nancy—"sure, she might know that no living crathur would be out lamenting under such a night as that was."

"She did think of that," said Tom; "but, as no *Banshee* ever followed her own[1] family, she didn't suppose that it could be such a thing; but she forgot that it might follow Larry's. I myself heard his brother Tom say afterwards, that a *Banshee* used always to be heard before any of them died."

"Did his brother hear it?" Ned inquired.

"He did," said Tom, "and his wife along with him, and knew at once that some death would happen in the family—but it wasn't long till he suspected who it came for; for, as he was going to bed that night, on looking toardst his own hearth, he thought he saw his brother stand-

[1] The *Banshee* in Ireland is, or rather was, said to follow only particular families—principally the old Milesians. It took the form of a woman weeping and wringing her hands, and betokened death to one of the family.

ing at the fire, with a very sorrowful face upon him. 'Why, Larry,' says he, 'how did you get in, after me barring the door?—or did you turn back from helping them with the corn? You surely hadn't time to go half the way since.' Larry, however, made him no answer; and, on looking for him again, there was no Larry there for him. 'Nelly,' says he to his wife, 'did you see any sight of Larry since he went to the still-house?' 'Arrah, no indeed, Tom,' says she; 'what's coming over you to spake to the man that's near Drumfarrar by this time?' 'God keep him from harm!' said Tom—'poor fellow, I wish nothing ill may happen him this night! I'm afeard, Nelly, that I saw his fetch [1]; and if I did, he hasn't long to live; for, when one's fetch is seen at this time of night, their lase of life, let them be sick or in health, is always short.' 'Hut, Tom, *aroon!*' says Nelly, 'it was the shadow of the jamb or yourself you saw in the light of the candle, or the shadow of the bed-post.'

"The next morning they were all up, hoping that he would drop in to them. Sally got a *creel* of turf, notwithstanding her condition, and put down a good fire to warm him; but the morning passed, and no sign of him. She now got very unasy, and mintioned to his brother what she felt, and Tom went up to the still-house to know if he was there, or to try if he could get any tidings of him. But, by the laws, when he heard that he had left that for home the night before, and he in a state of liquor, putting this and what he had heard and seen in his house together, Tom knew that something must have happened him. He went home again, and on his way had his eye about him, thinking that it would be no miracle if he'd meet him lying head-foremost in a ditch; however, he did not, but went on, expecting to find him at home before him.

"In the manetime the neighbours had been all raised to search for him; and, indeed, the hills were alive with people. It was the second day after, that Sally was standing, looking out at her own door toardst the mountains, expecting that every

[1] This in the North of Ireland is called wraith, as in Scotland. Carleton adopted the other term as more national. The "fetch" assumes the likeness of the person who is to die, but does not appear to that person, but to his or her friends.—ED.

man with a blue coat upon him might be Larry, when she saw a crowd of people coming down the hills. Her heart leaped to her mouth, and she sent Dick, the eldest of the sons, to meet them, and run back with word to her if he was among them. Dick went away; but he hadn't gone far when he met his uncle Tom coming on before the rest.

"'Uncle,' says Dick, 'did you get my father, for I must fly back with word to my mother, like lightning?'

"'Come here, Dick,' says Tom; 'God help you, my poor *bouchal!* Come here, and walk alongside of me, for you can't go back to your mother till I see her first. God help you, my poor *bouchal*—it's you that's to be pitied this blessed and sorrowful day;' and the poor fellow could by no means keep in the tears. But he was saved the trouble of breaking the dismal tidings to poor Sally; for, as she stood watching the crowd, she saw a door carried upon their shoulders, with something like a man stretched upon it. She turned in, feeling as if a bullet had gone through her head, and sat down with her back to the door, for fraid she might see the thruth, for she couldn't be quite sure, they were at such a distance. At last she ventured to take another look out, for she couldn't bear what she felt within her, and just as she rose and came to the door the first thing she saw coming down the hill, a little above the house, was the body of her husband stretched on a door—dead. At that minute her brother-in-law, Tom, just entered, in time to prevent her and the child she had in her arms from falling on the flure. She had seen enough, God help her!—for she took labour that instant, and in about two hours afterwards was stretched a corpse beside her husband, with her heart-broken and desolate orphans in an uproar of outher misery about them. That was the end of Larry M'Farland and Sally Lowry: two that might have done well in the world, had they taken care of themselves, avoided fairs and markets—except when they had business there—not giving themselves idle fashions by drinking or going to dances, and wrought as well for themselves as they did for others."

"But how did he lose his life, at all, at all?" inquired Nancy.

"Why, they found his hat in a bog hole upon the water,

and, on searching the hole itself, poor Larry was fished up from the bottom of it."

"Well, that's a murdhering sorrowful story," said Shane Fadh; "but you won't be after passing that on us for the wake, anyhow."

"Well, you must learn patience, Shane," said the narrator, "for you know patience is a virtue."

"I'll warrant you that Tom and his wife made a better hand of themselves," said Alick M'Kinley, "than Larry and Sally did."

"Ah! I wouldn't fear, Alick," said Tom, "but you would come at the thruth—'tis you that may say they did; there wasn't two in the parish more comfortable than the same two, at the very time that Larry and Sally came by their deaths. It would do you good to look at their hagyard—the corn-stacks were so nately roped and trimmed, and the walls so well made up, that a bird could scarcely get into it. Their barn and byre, too, and dwelling-house, were all comfortably thatched, and the windies all glazed, with not a broken pane in them. Altogether, they had come on wondherfully—sould a good dale of male and praties every year; so that in a short time they were able to lay by a little money to help to fortune off their little girls, that were growing up fine *colleens*, all out."

"And you may add, I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "that they lost no time going to fairs or dances, or other foolish divarsions. I'll engage they never were at a dance in the Squire's kitchen; that they never went about losing their time working for others when their own business was going at sixes and sevens for want of hands; nor spent their money drinking and thrating a parcel of friends that only laughed at them for their pains, and wouldn't, maybe, put one foot past the other to sarve them; nor never fought and abused one another for what they both were guilty of."

"Well," said Tom, "you have saved me some trouble, Mr. Morrow; for you just said to a hair what they were. But I mustn't forget to mintion one thing that I saw the morning of the berril. We were about a dozen of neighbours, talking in the street, just before the door; both the hagyards were forninst us—Tom's snug and nate—but Charley Lawder had to go over from where he stood to drive the pig out of poor

Larry's. There was one of the stacks with the side out of it just as he had drawn away the sheaves from time to time; for the stack leaned to one side, and he pulled sheaves out of the other side to keep it straight. Now, Mr. Morrow, wasn't he an unfortunate man? for whoever would go down to Squire Dickson's hagyard would see the same Larry's handiwork so beautiful and elegant, though his own was in such *brutheen*.[1] Even his barn went to wrack; and he was obliged to thrash his oats in the open air when there would be a frost, and he used to lose one-third of it; and if there came a thaw, 'twould almost break the crathur."

"God knows," says Nancy, looking over at Ned significantly, "and Larry's not alone in neglecting his business—that is, if sartin people were allowed to take their own way; but the truth of it is that he met with a bad woman.[2] If he had a careful, sober, industrious wife of his own, that would take care of the house and place—(Biddy, will you hand me over that other clew out of the windy stool there, till I finish this stocking for Ned)—the story would have another ending, anyhow."

"In throth," said Tom, "that's no more than thruth, Nancy—but he had not, and everything went to the bad with him entirely."

"It's a thousand pities he hadn't yourself, Nancy," said Alick, grinning; "if he had, I haven't the laste doubt at all but he'd die worth money."

"Go on, Alick—go on, *avick;* I will give you lave to have your joke, anyway; for it's you that's the patthern to any man that would wish to thrive in the world."

"If Ned dies, Nancy, I don't know a woman I'd prefer—I'm now a widdy[3] these five years; and I feel, somehow, particularly since I began to spend my evenings here, that I'm disremembering very much the old proverb—'A burnt child dreads the fire.'"

"Thank you, Alick; you think I swally that. But as for

[1] *Brutheen* is potato champed with butter. Anything in a loose, broken, and irregular state is said to be in *brutheen*—that is, disorder and confusion.

[2] Wife.

[3] The peasantry of a great portion of Ireland use the word widow as applicable to both sexes.

Ned, the never a fear of him; except that an increasing stomach is a sign of something; or, what's the best chance of all, Alick, for you and me, that he should meet Larry's fate in some of his drunken fits."

"Now, Nancy," says Ned, "there's no use in talking that-a-way; it's only last Thursday, Mr. Morrow, that, in presence of her own brother, Jem Connolly, the breeches-maker, and Billy M'Kinny, there, I put my two five fingers acrass, and swore solemnly by them five crosses, that, except my mind changed, I'd never drink more nor one half-pint of spirits and three pints of porther in a day."

"Oh, hould your tongue, Ned—hould your tongue, and don't make me spake," said Nancy. "God help you! many a time you've put the same fingers acrass, and many a time your mind has changed; but I'll say no more now—wait till we see how you'll keep it."

"Healths apiece, your sowls," said Ned, winking at the company.

"Well, Tom," said Andy Morrow, "about the wake?"

"Och, och! that was the merry wake, Mr. Morrow. From that day to this I remarked that, living or dead, them that won't respect themselves, or take care of their families, won't be respected—and, sure enough, I saw full proof of that same at poor Larry's wake. Many a time afterwards I pitied the childher, for, if they had seen better, they wouldn't turn out as they did—all but the two youngest, that their uncle took to himself, and reared afterwards; but they had no one to look afther them, and how could it be expected, from what they seen, that good could come of them? Squire Dickson gave Tom the other seven acres, although he could have got a higher rint from others; but he was an industrious man that desarved encouragement, and he got it."

"I suppose Tom was at the expense of Larry's berrin, as well as of his marriage?" said Alick.

"In throth, and he was," said Tom, "although he didn't desarve it from him when he was alive,[1] seeing he neglected many a good advice that Tom and his dacent woman of a

[1] The genuine blunders of the Irish—not those studied for them by men ignorant of their modes of expression and habits of life—are always significant, clear, and full of strong sense and moral truth.

wife often gave him: for all that, blood is thicker than wather—and it's he that waked and berrid him dacently; by the same token that there was both full and plenty of the best over him, and everything, as far as Tom was consarned, dacent and ereditable about the place."

"He did it for his own sake, of coorse," said Nancy, "bekase one wouldn't wish, if they had it at all, to see any one belonging to them worse off than another at their wake or berrin."

"Thrue for you, Nancy," said M'Roarkin; "and, indeed, Tom was well spoken of by the neighbours for his kindness to his brother after his death; and luck and grace attended him for it, and the world flowed upon him before it came to his own turn.

"Well, when a body dies even a natural death, it's wondherful how soon it goes about; but when they come to an untimely one it spreads like fire on a dry mountain."

"Was there no inquest?" asked Andy Morrow.

"The sorra inquist, not making you an ill answer, sir—the people weren't so exact in them days; but, anyhow, the man was dead, and what good could an inquist do him? The only thing that grieved them was that they both died without the priest; and well it might, for it's an awful thing entirely to die without having the clargy's hands over a body. I tould you that the news of his death spread over all the counthry in less than no time. Accordingly, in the coorse of the day, their relations began to come to the place; but, anyway, messengers had been sent especially for them.

"The Squire very kindly lent sheets for them both to be laid out in, and mould-candlesticks to hould the lights; and, God He knows, 'twas a grievous sight to see the father and mother both stretched beside one another in their poor place, and their little orphans about them; the *gorsoons*—them that had sense enough to know their loss—breaking their hearts, the crathurs, and so hoarse that they weren't able to cry or spake. But, indeed, it was worse to see the two young things going over, and wanting to get acrass to waken their daddy and mammy, poor desolit childher!

"When the corpses were washed and dressed, they looked uncommonly well, consitherin'. Larry, indeed, didn't bear

death so well as Sally; but you couldn't meet a purtier corpse than she was in a day's travelling. I say, when they were washed and dressed, their friends and neighbours knelt down round them, and offered up a Pather and Ave apiece for the good of their sowls; when this was done, they all raised the *keen*, stooping over them at a half bend, clapping their hands, and praising them, as far as they could say anything good of them; and, indeed, the crathurs, they were never any one's enemy but their own, so that nobody could say an ill word of either of them. Bad luck to it for *poteen*-work every day it rises! only for it, that couple's poor orphans wouldn't be left without father or mother as they were; nor poor Hurrish go the grey gate he did, if he had his father living, maybe; but having nobody to bridle him in, he took to horse-riding for the Squire, and then to staling them for himself. He was hanged afterwards, along with Peter Doraghy Crolly, that shot Ned Wilson's uncle of the Black Hills.

"After the first keening, the friends and neighbours took their seats about the corpses. In a short time whisky, pipes, snuff, and tobacco came, and every one about the place got a glass and a fresh pipe. Tom, when he held his glass in his hand, looking at his dead brother, filled up to the eyes, and couldn't for some time get out a word; at last, when he was able to spake, 'Poor Larry,' says he, 'you're lying there low before me, and many a happy day we spint with one another. When we were childher,' said he, turning to the rest, 'we were never asunder. He was oulder nor me by two years, and can I ever forget the leathering he gave Dick Rafferty long ago for hitting me with the rotten egg—although Dick was a great dale bigger than either of us. God knows, although you didn't thrive in life, either of you, as you might and could have done, there wasn't a more neighbourly or friendly couple in the parish they lived in; and now, God help them, look at them both, and their poor orphans over them. Larry, *acushla*, your health, and, Sally, yours; and may God Almighty have marcy on both your sowls.'

"After this the neighbours began to flock in more generally. When any relation of the corpses would come, as soon, you see, as they'd get inside the door, whether man

or woman, they'd raise the shout of a *keen*, and all the people about the dead would begin along with them, stooping over them and clapping their hands as before.

"Well, I said it's it that was the merry wake, and that was only the thruth, neighbours. As soon as night came, all the young boys and girls from the country-side about them flocked to it in scores. In a short time the house was crowded; and maybe there wasn't laughing, and story-telling, and singing, and smoking, and drinking, and crying—all going on, helter-skelter, together. When they'd be all in full chorus this-a-way, maybe some new friend or relation, that wasn't there before, would come in, and raise the *keen*. Of coorse, the youngsters would then keep quiet; and if the person coming in was from the one neighbourhood with any of them that were so merry, as soon as he'd raise the shout, the merry folks would rise up, begin to pelt their hands together, and cry along with him till their eyes would be as red as a ferret's. That once over, they'd be down again at the songs, and divarsion, and divilment, just as if nothing of the kind had taken place. The other would then shake hands with the friends of the corpses, get a glass or two and a pipe, and in a few minutes be as merry as the best of them."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "I should like to know if the Scotch and English are such heerum-skeerum kind of people as we Irishmen are."

"Musha, in throth I'm sure they're not," says Nancy; "for I bleeve that Irishmen are like nobody in the wide world but themselves—quare crathurs, that'll laugh, or cry, or fight with any one, just for nothing else, good or bad, but company."

"Indeed, and you all know that what I'm saying's truth, except Mr. Morrow there, that I'm telling it to, bekase he's not in the habit of going to wakes; although, to do him justice, he's very friendly in going to a neighbour's funeral; and, indeed, kind father for you,[1] Mr. Morrow, for it's he that was a raal good hand at going to such places himself.

"Well, as I was telling you, there was great sport going on. In one corner you might see a knot of ould men sitting together, talking over ould times—ghost stories, fairy tales,

[1] That is, in this point you are of the same kind as your father.

or the great rebellion of '41,[1] and the strange story of *Lamh Dearg*, or the 'bloody hand,' that, maybe, I'll tell you all some other night, plase God; there they'd sit smoking — their faces quite plased with the pleasure of the pipe—amusing themselves and a crowd of people that would be listening to them with open mouth. Or it's odds but there would be some droll young fellow among them, taking a rise out of them; and, positively, he'd often find them able enough for him, particularly ould Ned Mangin, that wanted at the time only four years of a hundred. The Lord be good to him, and rest his sowl in glory, it's he that was the pleasant ould man, and could tell a story with any one that ever got up.

"In another corner there was a different set, bent on some piece of divilment of their own. The boys would be sure to get beside their sweethearts, anyhow; and if there was a purty girl, as you may set it down there was, it's there the skroodging, and the pushing, and the shoving, and sometimes the knocking down itself, would be, about seeing who'd get her. There's ould Katty Duffy, that's now as crooked as the hind leg of a dog, and it's herself was then as straight as a rush and as blooming as a rose—Lord bless us, what an alteration time makes upon the strongest and fairest of us!—it's she that was the purty girl that night, and it's myself that gave Frank M'Shane, that's still alive to acknowledge it, the broad of his back upon the flure when he thought to pull her off my knee. The very *gorsoons* and *girshas* were coorting away among themselves, and learning one another to smoke in the dark corners. But all this, Mr. Morrow, took place in the corpse-house, before ten or eleven o'clock at night. After that time the house got too throng entirely, and couldn't hould the half of them; so, by jing, off we set, maning all the youngsters of us, both boys and girls, out to Tom's barn, that was red[2] up for us, there to commence the plays. When we were gone, the ould people had more room, and they moved about on the sates we had left them. In the manetime, lashings of tobacco and snuff, cut in platefuls, and piles of fresh new pipes, were laid on the table for any man that wished to use them.

[1] 1641, when, according to some historians, a massacre of Protestants took place. The 'Red Hand' (*Lamh Dearg*) is the emblem of Ulster.

[2] Cleared up—set in order.

"When we got to the barn, it's then we took our pumps off[1] in arnest—by the hokey, such sport you never saw. The first play we began was 'Hot-loof,' and maybe there wasn't skelping then. It was the two parishes of Errigle-Keeran and Errigle-Truagh against one another. There was the Slip from Althadhawan, for Errigle-Truagh, against Pat M'Ardle, that had married Lanty Gorman's daughter of Cargagh, for Errigle-Keeran. The way they play it, Mr. Morrow, is this: —Two young men out of each parish go out upon the flure—one of them stands up, then bends himself, sir, at a half bend, placing his left hand behind on the back part of his ham, keeping it there to receive what it's to get. Well, there he stands; and the other, coming behind him, places his left foot out before him, doubles up the cuff of his coat, to give his hand and wrist freedom; he then rises his right arm, coming down with the heel of his hand upon the other fellow's palm, under him, with full force. By jing, it's the divil's own divarsion; for you might as well get a stroke of a sledge as a blow from one of them able, hard-working fellows, with hands upon them like limestone. When the fellow that's down gets it hot and heavy, the man that struck him stands bent in his place, and some friend of the other comes down upon him, and pays him for what the other fellow got.

"In this way they take it, turn about, one out of each parish, till it's over; for, I believe, if they were to pelt one another since,[2] that they'd never give up. Bless my soul, but it was terrible to hear the strokes that the Slip and Pat M'Ardle did give that night. The Slip was a young fellow upwards of six feet, with great able bones and little flesh, but terrible thick shinnins;[3] his wrist was as hard and strong as a bar of iron. M'Ardle was a low, broad man, with a rucket[4] head and bull neck, and a pair of shoulders that you could hardly get your arms about, Mr. Morrow, long as they are; it's he, indeed, that was the firm, well-built chap, entirely. At any rate, a man might as well get a kick from a horse as a stroke from either of them.

"Little Jemmy Tegue, I remimber, struck a cousin of the

[1] Threw aside all restraint.
[2] From that hour to this.
[3] Sinews.
[4] Curled.

Slip's a very smart blow, that made him dance about the room and blow his fingers for ten minutes after it. Jemmy himself was a tight, smart fellow. When the Slip saw what his cousin had got, he rises up, and stands over Jemmy so coolly, and with such good humour, that every one in the house trembled for poor Jemmy, bekase, you see, whenever the Slip was bent on mischief he used always to grin. Jemmy, however, kept himself bent firm; and, to do him justice, didn't flinch from under the stroke, as many of them did—no, he was like a rock. Well, the Slip, as I said, stood over him, fixing himself for the stroke, and coming down with such a pelt on poor Jemmy's hand, that the first thing we saw was the blood across the Slip's own legs and feet, that had burst out of poor Jemmy's finger-ends. The Slip then stooped to receive the next blow himself, and you may be sure there was above two dozen up to be at him. No matther; one man they all gave way to, and that was Pat M'Ardle.

"'Hould away,' says Pat—'clear off, boys, all of you—this stroke's mine by right, anyhow; and,' says he, swearing a terrible oath, 'if you don't sup sorrow for that stroke,' says he to the Slip, 'why, Pat M'Ardle's not behind you here.'

"He then up with his arm, and came down—why, you would think that the stroke he gave the Slip had druv his hand right into his body; but, anyway, it's he that took full satisfaction for what his cousin got; for, if the Slip's fingers had been cut off at the tops, the blood couldn't spring out from under his nails more nor it did. After this the Slip couldn't strike another blow, bekase his hand was disabled out and out.

"The next play they went to was the 'Sitting *Brogue*.' This is played by a ring of them sitting down upon the bare ground, keeping their knees up. A shoemaker's leather apron is then got, or a good stout *brogue*, and sent round under their knees. In the manetime, one stands in the middle; and after the *brogue* is sent round he is to catch it as soon as he can. While he stands there, of coorse, his back must be to some one, and accordingly those that are behind him thump him right and left with the *brogue*, while he, all the time, is striving to catch it. Whoever he catches this *brogue* with must stand up in his place, while he sits

down where the other had been, and then the play goes on as before.

"There's another play called the 'Standing *Brogue*'—where one man gets a *brogue* of the same kind, and another stands up facing him with his hands locked together, forming an arch turned upside down. The man that houlds the *brogue* then strikes him with it betune the hands; and even the smartest fellow receives several pelts before he is able to close his hands and catch it; but when he does he becomes *brogue*-man, and one of the opposite party stands for him until he catches it. The same thing is gone through, from one to another, on each side, until it is over.

"The next is 'Frimsey Framsey,' and is played in this manner:—A chair or stool is placed in the middle of the flure, and the man who manages the play sits down upon it, and calls his sweetheart, or the prettiest girl in the house. She accordingly comes forward, and must kiss him. He then rises up, and she sits down. 'Come now,' he says, 'fair maid —Frimsey Framsey, who's your fancy?' She then calls him she likes best, and when the young man she calls comes over and kisses her, he then takes her place, and calls another girl—and so on, smacking away for a couple of hours. Well, it's no wonder that Ireland's full of people; for I believe they do nothing but coort from the time they're the hoith of my leg. I dunna is it true, as I hear Captain Sloethorn's steward say, that the Englishwomen are so fond of Irishmen?"

"To be sure it is," said Shane Fadh; "don't I remember myself, when Mr. Fowler went to England—and he as fine-looking a young man at the time as ever got into a saddle—he was riding up the streets of London one day, and his servant after him—and by the same token he was a thousand pound worse than nothing; but no matter for that, you see luck was before him—what do you think, but a rich-dressed livery servant came out, and stopping the Squire's man, axed whose servant he was.

"'Why, thin,' says Ned Magavran, who was his body-servant at the time, 'bad luck to you, you *spalpeen*, what a question do you ax, and you have eyes in your head!' says he—'hard feeding to you!' says he, 'you vagabone, don't you see I'm my master's?'

"The Englishman laughed. 'I know that, Paddy,' says he—for they call us all Paddies in England, as if we had only the one name among us, the thieves—'but I wish to know his name,' says the Englishman.

"'You do!' says Ned; 'and by the powers,' says he, 'but you must first tell me which side of the head you'd wish to hear it an.'

"'Oh, as for that,' says the Englishman, not up to him, you see, 'I don't care much, Paddy; only let me hear it, and where he lives.'

"'Just keep your ground, then,' says Ned, 'till I light off this blood horse of mine'—he was an ould *garran* that was fattened up, not worth forty shillings—'this blood horse of mine,' says Ned, 'and I'll tell you.'

"So down he gets, and lays the Englishman sprawling in the channel.

"'Take that, you vagabone,' says he, 'and it'll larn you to call people by their right names agin; I was christened as well as you, you *spalpeen!*'

"All this time the lady was looking out of the windy, breaking her heart laughing at Ned and the servant; but, behould, she knew a thing or two, it seems; for, instead of sending a man, at all, at all, what does she do, but sends her own maid, a very purty girl, who comes up to Ned, putting the same question to him.

"'What's his name, *avourneen?*' says Ned, melting, to be sure, at the sight of her. 'Why, then, darling, who could refuse you anything? But, you jewel, by the hokey, you must bribe me, or I'm dumb,' says he.

"'How could I bribe you?' says she, with a sly smile—for Ned himself was a well-looking young fellow at the time.

"'I'll show you that,' says Ned, 'if you tell me where you live; but, for fraid you'd forget it—with them two lips of your own, my darling.'

"'There in that great house,' says the maid; 'my mistress is one of the beautifullest and richest young ladies in London, and she wishes to know where your master could be heard of.'

"'Is that the house?' says Ned, pointing to it.

"'Exactly,' says she; 'that's it.'

"'Well, *acushla*,' says he, 'you've a purty and an innocent-

looking face; but I'm tould there's many a trap in London well baited. Just only run over while I'm looking at you, and let me see that purty face of yours smiling at me out of the windy that that young lady is peeping at us from.'

"This she had to do.

"'My master,' thought Ned, while she was away, 'will aisily find out what kind of a house it is, anyhow, if that be it.'

"In a short time he saw her in the windy, and Ned then gave her a sign to come down to him.

"'My master,' says he, 'never was afeard to show his face, or tell his name to any one—he's a Squire Fowler,' says he—'a sarjunt-major in a great militia regiment—he shot five men in his time, and there's not a gentleman in the country he lives in that dare say Boo to his blanket. And now, what's your own name,' says Ned, 'you flattering little blackguard, you?'

"'My name's Betty Cunningham,' says she.

"'And, next—what's your mistress's, my darling?' says Ned.

"'There it is,' says she, handing him a card.

"'Very well,' says Ned, the thief, looking at it with a great air, making as if he could read—'this will just do, *a colleen bawn*.'

"'Do you read in your country with the wrong side of the print up?' says she.

"'Up or down,' says Ned, 'it's all one to us in Ireland; but, anyhow, I'm left-handed, you deluder!'

"The upshot of it was that her mistress turned out to be a great hairess and a great beauty, and she and Fowler got married in less than a month. So, you see, it's true enough that the Englishwomen are fond of Irishmen," says Shane. "But, Tom—with submission for stopping you—go on with your wake."

"The next play, then, is 'Marrying'——"

"Hooh!" says Andy Morrow—"why, all their plays are about kissing and marrying, and the like of that."

"Surely, and they are, sir," says Tom.

"It's all the nathur of the baste," says Alick.

"The next is marrying. A *bouchal* puts an ould dark coat on him, and if he can borry a wig from any of the ould men in the wake-house, why, well and good, he's the liker his

work—this is the priest. He takes and drives all the young men out of the house, and shuts the door upon them, so that they can't get in till he lets them. He then ranges the girls all beside one another, and going to the first, makes her name him she wishes to be her husband; this she does, of coorse, and the priest lugs him in, shutting the door upon the rest. He then pronounces a funny marriage sarvice of his own between them, and the husband smacks her first, and then the priest. Well, these two are married, and he places his wife upon his knee, for fraid of taking up too much room, you persave; there they coort away again, and why shouldn't they? The priest then goes to the next, and makes her name her husband; this is complied with, and he is brought in after the same manner, but no one else till they're called; he is then married, and kisses his wife, and the priest kisses her after him; and so they're all married.

"But if you'd see them that don't chance to be called at all, the figure they cut—slipping into some dark corner, to avoid the mobbing they get from the priest and the others. When they're all united, they must each sing a song—man and wife, according as they sit; or if they can't sing, or get some one to do it for them, they're divorced. But the priest himself usually lilts for any one that's not able to give a verse. You see, Mr. Morrow, there's always in the neighbourhood some droll fellow that takes all these things upon him, and if he happens to be absent, the wake would be quite dull."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "have you any more of their sports, Tom?"

"Ay, have I—one of the best and pleasantest you heard yet."

"I hope there's no coorting in it," says Nancy; "God knows we're tired of their kissing and marrying."

"Were you always so?" says Ned, across the fire to her.

"Behave yourself, Ned," says she; "don't you make me spake; sure, you were set down as the greatest *Brine-oge* that ever was known in the parish, for such things."

"No, but don't you make *me* spake," replies Ned.

"Here, Biddy," said Nancy, "bring that uncle of yours another pint—that's what he wants most at the present time, I'm thinking."

Biddy accordingly complied with this.

"Don't make me spake," continued Ned.

"Come, Ned," she replied, "you've a fresh pint now; so drink it, and give no more *gosther*."

"*Shud-orth!*" says Ned, putting the pint to his head, and winking slyly at the rest.

"Ay, wink!—in troth, I'll be up to you for that, Ned," says Nancy, by no means satisfied that Ned should enter into particulars. "Well, Tom," said she, diverting the conversation, "go on, and give us the remainder of your wake."

"Well," says Tom, "the next play is in the milintary line. You see, Mr. Morrow, the man that leads the sports places them all on their sates—gets from some of the girls a white handkerchief, which he ties round his hat, as you would tie a piece of mourning; he then walks round them two or three times, singing—

'Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
And folly the lad with the white cockade?'

"When he sings this, he takes off his hat, and puts it on the head of the girl he likes best, who rises up and puts her arms round him, and then they both go about in the same way, singing the same words. She then puts the hat on some young man, who gets up, and goes round with them, singing as before. He next puts it on the girl he loves best, who, after singing and going round in the same manner, puts it on another, and he on his sweetheart, and so on. This is called the 'White Cockade.' When it's all over, that is, when every young man has pitched upon the girl that he wishes to be his sweetheart, they sit down, and sing songs, and coort, as they did at the marrying. After this comes the 'Weds' or 'Forfeits,' or what they call putting round the button. Every one gives in a forfeit—the boys a pocket handkerchief or a penknife, and the girls a neck handkerchief or something that way. The forfeit is held over them, and each of them stoops in turn. They are then compelled to command the person that owns that forfeit to sing a song—to kiss such and such a girl—or to carry some ould man, with his legs about their neck, three times round the house, and this last is

always great fun. Or, maybe, a young upsetting fellow will be sent to kiss some toothless, slavering ould woman, just to punish him; or if a young woman is any way saucy, she'll have to kiss some ould withered fellow, his tongue hanging with age half-way down his chin, and the tobacco water trinckling from each corner of his mouth.

"By jingo, many a time, when the friends of the corpse would be breaking their very hearts with grief and affliction, I have seen them obligated to laugh out, in spite of themselves, at the drollery of the priest, with his ould black coat and wig upon him; and, when the laughing fit would be over, to see them rocking themselves again with the sorrow—so sad. The best man for managing such sports in this neighbourhood, for many a year, was Roger M'Cann, that lives up as you go to the mountains. You wouldn't begrudge to go ten miles, the cowldest winter night that ever blew, to see and hear Roger.

"There's another play, that they call the 'Priest of the Parish,' which is remarkably pleasant. One of the boys gets a wig upon himself, as before—goes out on the flure, places the boys in a row, calls one his Man Jack, and says to each, 'What will you be?' One answers, 'I'll be Black Cap,' another 'Red Cap,' and so on. He then says, 'The priest of the parish has lost his considhering cap—some say this, and some say that, but I say my man Jack!' Man Jack, then, to put it off himself, says, 'Is it me, sir?' 'Yes, you, sir!' 'You lie, sir!' 'Who then, sir?' 'Black Cap!' If Black Cap, then, doesn't say, 'Is it me, sir?' before the priest has time to call him, he must put his hand on his ham, and get a pelt of the *brogue*. A body must be supple with the tongue in it.

"After this comes one they calls 'Horns,' or the 'Painter.' A droll fellow gets a lump of soot or lampblack, and, after fixing a ring of the boys and girls about him, he lays his two forefingers on his knees and says, 'Horns, horns, cow horns!' and then raises his fingers by a jerk up above his head; the boys and girls in the ring then do the same thing, for the meaning of the play is this: the man with the black'ning always raises his fingers every time he names an animal; but if he names any that has no horns, and that the others jerk up their fingers then, they must get a stroke over the face

with the soot. 'Horns, horns, goat horns!'—then he ups with his fingers like lightning; they must all do the same, bekase a goat has horns. 'Horns, horns, horse horns!'—he ups with them again; but the boys and girls ought not, bekase a horse has not horns; however, any one who raises them gets a slake. So that it all comes to this: any one, you see, that lifts his fingers when an animal is named that has *no* horns, or any one that does not raise them when a baste is mintioned that has horns, will get a mark. It's a purty game, and requires a keen eye and a quick hand; and maybe there's not fun in straiking the soot over the purty, warm, rosy cheeks of the *colleens,* while their eyes are dancing with delight in their heads, and their sweet breath comes over so pleasant about one's face—the darlings! Och, och!

"There's another game they call 'The Silly Ould Man,' that's played this way:—A ring of the boys and girls is made on the flure—boy and girl about—houlding one another by their hands; well and good—a young fellow gets into the middle of the ring, as 'the silly ould man.' There he stands looking at all the girls to choose a wife, and, in the manetime, the youngsters of the ring sing out—

'Here's a silly ould man that lies alone,
That lies all alone,
That lies all alone;
Here's a silly ould man that lies all alone,
He wants a wife, and he can get none.'

"When the boys and girls sing this, the silly ould man must choose a wife from some of the *colleens* belonging to the ring. Having made choice of her, she goes into the ring along with him, and they all sing out—

'Now, young couple, you're married together,
You're married together,
You're married together,
You must obey your father and mother,
And love one another like sister and brother—
I pray, young couple, you'll kiss together!'

And you may be sure this part of the marriage is not missed, anyway."

"I doubt," said Andy Morrow, "that good can't come of so much kissing, marrying, and coorting."

The narrator twisted his mouth knowingly, and gave a significant groan.

"*Be dhe husth,* hould your tongue, Misther Morrow," said he. "Biddy, *avourneen,*" he continued, addressing Biddy and Bessy, "and Bessy, *alanna,* just take a friend's advice, and never mind going to wakes; to be sure, there's plinty of fun and divarsion at such places, but—healths apiece!" putting the pint to his lips—"and that's all I say about it."

"Right enough, Tom," observed Shane Fadh—"sure, most of the matches are planned at them, and, I may say, most of the 'runaways' too—poor young foolish crathurs, going off and getting themselves married; then bringing small, helpless families upon their hands, without money or manes to begin the world with, and afterwards likely to eat one another out of the face for their folly. However, there's no putting ould heads upon young shoulders, and I doubt, except the wakes are stopped altogether, that it'll be the ould case still."

"I never remember being at a counthry wake," said Andy Morrow. "How is everything laid out in the house?"

"Sure it's to you I'm telling the whole story, Mr. Morrow: these thieves about me here know all about it as well as I do—the house, eh? Why, you see, the two corpses were stretched beside one another, washed and laid out. There were long deal boords, with their ends upon two stools, laid over the bodies; the boords were covered with a white sheet got at the big house, so the corpses weren't to be seen. On these, again, were placed large mould-candles, plates of cut tobacco, pipes, and snuff, and so on. Sometimes corpses are waked in a bed, with their faces visible; when that is the case, white sheets and crosses are pinned up about the bed, except in the front; but, when they're undher boord, a set of ould women sit smoking and rocking themselves from side to side, quite sorrowful—these are '*keeners*'—friends or relations; and, when every one connected with the dead comes in, they raise the *keen,* like a song of sorrow, wailing and clapping their hands.

"The furniture is mostly removed, and sates made round the walls, where the neighbours sit smoking, chatting, and

gosthering. The best of aiting and dhrinking that they can afford is provided; and, indeed, there is generally open house, for it's unknown how people injure themselves by their kindness and waste at christ'nings, weddings, and wakes.

"In regard to poor Larry's wake—we had all this, and more at it; for, as I obsarved a while agone, the man had made himself no friends when he was living, and the neighbours gave a loose to all kinds of divilment when he was dead. Although there's no man would be guilty of any disrespect where the dead are, yet, when a person has led a good life, and conducted themselves dacently and honestly, the young people of the neighbourhood show their respect by going through their little plays and divarsions quieter and with less noise, lest they may give any offince; but, as I said, whenever the person didn't live as they ought to do, there's no stop to their noise and rollokin.

"When it drew near morning, every one of us took his sweetheart, and, after convoying her home, went to our own houses, to get a little sleep. So that was the end of poor Larry M'Farland, and his wife Sally Lowry."

"Success, Tom!" said Bill M'Kinny; "take a pull of the malt now, afther the story, your soul! But what was the funeral like?"

"Why, then, a poor berrin it was," said Tom; "a miserable sight, God knows—just a few of the neighbours; for those that used to take his thrate, and, while he had a shilling in his pocket, blarney him up, not one of the skulking thieves showed their faces at it—a good warning to foolish men that throw their money down throaths that haven't hearts anundher them. But, boys, I desarve another thrate, I think, afther my story!"

THE STATION

OUR readers are to suppose the Reverend Philemy M'Guirk, parish priest of Tir-neer, to be standing upon the altar of the chapel, facing the congregation, after having gone through the canon of the mass, and having nothing more of the service to perform than the usual prayers with which he closes the ceremony.

"Take notice that the stations for the following week will be held as follows:—

"*On Monday, in Jack Gallagher's, of Corraghnamoddagh.* Are you there, Jack?"

"To the fore, yer reverence."

"Why, then, Jack, there's something ominous—something auspicious—to happen, or we wouldn't have you here; for it's very seldom that you make part or parcel of the present congregation; seldom are you here, Jack, it must be confessed. However, you know the old classical proverb, or if you don't, I do, which will just answer as well—*Non semper ridit Apollo*—it's not every day Manus kills a bullock; so, as you are here, be prepared for us on Monday."

"Never fear, yer reverence, never fear; I think you ought to know that the grazin' at Corraghnamoddagh's not bad."

"To do you justice, Jack, the mutton was always good with you; only, if you would get it better killed it would be an improvement."

"Very well, yer reverence, I'll do it."

"*On Tuesday, in Peter Murtagh's, of the Crooked Commons.* Are you there, Peter?"

"Here, yer reverence."

"Indeed, Peter, I might know you are here; and I wish that a great many of my flock would take example by you: if they did, I wouldn't be so far behind in getting in my dues. Well, Peter, I suppose you know that this is Michaelmas?"

"So fat, yer reverence, that they're not able to wag; but,

anyway, Katty has them marked for you—two fine young crathurs, only last year's fowl; and the ducks isn't a taste behind them—she's crammin' them this month past."

"I believe you, Peter, and I would take your word for more than the condition of the geese—remember me to Katty, Peter."

"*On Wednesday, in Parrah More Slevin's, of Mullaghfadh.* Are you there, Parrah More?" No answer. "Parrah More Slevin?" Silence. "Parrah More Slevin, of Mullaghfadh?" No reply. "Dan Fagan?"

"Present, sir."

"Do you know what keeps that reprobate from mass?"

"I bleeve he's takin' advantage, sir, of the frast, to get in his praties to-day, in respect of the bad footin', sir, for the horses in the bog when there's not a frast. Anyhow, betune that and a bit of a sore head that he got, yer reverence, on Thursday last in takin' part wid the O'Scallaghans agin the Bradys, I believe he had to stay away to-day."

"On the Sabbath day, too, without my leave! Well, tell him from me that I'll make an example of him to the whole parish if he doesn't attend mass better. Will the Bradys and the O'Scallaghans never be done with their quarrelling? I protest, if they don't live like Christians, I'll read them out from the altar. Will you tell Parrah More that I'll hold a station in his house on next Wednesday?"

"I will, sir; I will, yer reverence."

"*On Thursday, in Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy's, of the Esker.* Are you there, Phaddhy?"

"Wid the help of God, I'm here, sir."

"Well, Phaddhy, how is yer son Briney, that's at the Latin? I hope he's coming on well at it?"

"Why, sir, he's not more nor a year and a half at it yet, and he's got more books amost nor he can carry—he'll break me buying books for him."

"Well, that's a good sign, Phaddhy; but why don't you bring him to me till I examine him?"

"Why, never a one of me can get him to go, sir; he's so much afeard of your reverence."

"Well, Phaddhy, we were once modest and bashful ourselves, and I'm glad to hear that he's afraid of his clargy;

but let him be prepared for me on Thursday, and maybe I'll let him know something he never heard before; I'll give him a Maynooth touch."

"Do you hear that, Briney," said the father, aside, to the son, who knelt at his knee—"ye must give up yer hurling and idling now, you see. Thank yer reverence, thank you, docthor."

"*On Friday, in Barny O'Darby's,* alias *Barny Butter's.* Are you there, Barny?"

"All that's left of me is here, sir."

"Well, Barny, how is the butter trade this season?"

"It's a little on the rise now, sir; in a month or so I'm expecting it will be brisk enough; Boney,[1] sir, is doing that much for us, anyway."

"Ay, and, Barny, he'll do more than that for us—God prosper him at all events—I only hope the time's coming, Barny, when every one will be able to eat his own butter, and his own beef too."

"God send it, sir."

"Well, Barny, I didn't hear from your brother Ned these two or three months; what has become of him?"

"Ah, yer reverence, Pentland done him up."

"What! the gauger?"

"He did, the thief; but maybe he'll sup sorrow for it afore he's much oulder."

"And who do you think informed, Barny?"

"Oh, I only wish we knew that, sir."

"I wish I knew it; and if I thought any miscreant here would become an informer I'd make an example of him. Well, Barny, on Friday next; but I suppose Ned has a drop still—eh, Barny?"

"Why, sir, we'll be apt to have something stronger nor wather, anyhow."

"Very well, Barny; your family was always a dacent and spirited family, I'll say that for them. But tell me, Barny, did you begin to dam the river yet?[2] I think the trouts and eels are running by this time."

[1] Bonaparte, in whom the peasantry saw a possible deliverer from English rule.—ED.

[2] It is usual among the peasantry to form, about Michaelmas, small artificial cascades, called dams, under which they place long, deep

"The creels are made, yer reverence, though we did not set them yet; but on Tuesday night, sir, wid the help o' God, we'll be ready."

"You can corn the trouts, Barny, and the eels too; but, should you catch nothing, go to Pat Hartigan, Captain Sloethorn's gamekeeper, and if you tell him it's for me, he'll drag you a batch out of the fish-pond."

"Ah! then, your reverence, it's 'imself that 'ill do that wid a heart an' a half."

Such was the conversation which took place between the Reverend Philemy M'Guirk and those of his parishioners in whose houses he had appointed to hold a series of stations for the week ensuing the Sunday laid in this our account of that hitherto undescribed portion of the Romish discipline.

Now, the reader is to understand that a station in this sense differs from a station made to any peculiar spot remarkable for local sanctity. There, a station means the performance of a pilgrimage to a certain place, under peculiar circumstances, and the going through a stated number of prayers and other penitential ceremonies, for the purpose of wiping out sin in this life, or of relieving the soul of some relation from the pains of purgatory in the other; here, it simply means the coming of the parish priest and his curate to some house in the town-land, on a day publicly announced from the altar for that purpose on the preceding Sabbath.

This is done to give those who live within the district in which the station is held an opportunity of coming to their duty, as frequenting the ordinance of confession is emphatically called. Those who attend confession in this manner once a year are considered merely to have done their duty; it is expected, however, that they should approach the tribunal, as it is termed, at least twice during that period—that is, at the two great feasts of Christmas and Easter. The observance or omission of this rite among Roman Catholics establishes, in a great degree, the nature of individual

wicker creels, shaped like inverted cones, for the purpose of securing the fish that are now on their return to the large rivers, after having deposited their spawn in the higher and remoter streams. It is surprising what a number of fish, particularly of eels, are caught in this manner —sometimes from one barrel to three in the course of a single night!

character. The man who frequents his duty will seldom be pronounced a bad man, let his conduct and his principles be what they may in other respects; and he who neglects it is looked upon by those who attend it as in a state little short of reprobation, no matter how correct or religious he may be, either in public or private life.

When the "giving out" of the stations was over, and a few more jests were broken by his reverence, to which the congregation paid the tribute of a general and uproarious laugh, he turned round on his heel, and with the greatest *sang froid* resumed the performance of the mass, whilst his "flock" began to finger their beads with faces as grave as if nothing of the kind had occurred. When mass was finished, and the holy water sprinkled upon the people, out of a tub carried by the mass-server through the chapel for that purpose, the priest gave them a fine Latin benediction, and they dispersed.

Now, of the four individuals in whose houses the stations were appointed to be held, we will select Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy for our purpose; and this we do because it was the first time in which a station was ever kept in his house, and consequently Phaddhy and his wife had to undergo the initiatory ceremony of entertaining Father Philemy and his curate, the Reverend Con M'Coul, at dinner.

Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy had been, until a short time before the period in question, a very poor man; but a little previous to that event a brother of his, who had no children, died very rich—that is, for a farmer—and left him his property, or, at least, the greater part of it. While Phaddhy was poor it was surprising what little notice he excited from his reverence; in fact, I have heard him acknowledge that during all the days of his poverty he never got a nod of recognition or kindness from Father Philemy, although he sometimes did, he said, from Father Con, his curate, who honoured him on two occasions so far as to challenge him to a bout at throwing the shoulder-stone, and once to a leaping match, at both of which exercises Father Con, but for the superior power of Phaddhy, had been unrivalled.

"It was an unlucky day to him," said Phaddhy, "that he went to challenge me, at all, at all; for I was the only man

that ever bate him, and he wasn't able to hould up his head in the parish for many a day afther."

As soon, however, as Phaddhy became a man of substance, one would almost think that there had been a secret relationship between his good fortune and Father Philemy's memory; for on their first meeting after Phaddhy's getting the property the latter shook him most cordially by the hand—a proof that, had not his recollection been as much improved as Phaddhy's circumstances, he could by no means have remembered him; but this is a failing in the memory of many, as well as in that of Father Philemy. Phaddhy, however, was no Donnell,[1] to use his own expression, and saw as far into a deal board as another man.

"And so, Phaddhy," said the priest, "how are all your family?—six you have, I think?"

"Four, yer rev'rence, only four," said Phaddhy, winking at Tim Dillon, his neighbour, who happened to be present—"three boys an' one girl."

"Bless my soul, and so it is, indeed, Phaddhy, and I ought to know it; and how is your wife Sarah?—I mean, I hope Mrs. Sheemus Phaddhy is well—by-the-bye, is that old complaint of hers gone yet?—a pain in the stomach, I think it was, that used to trouble her—I hope in God, Phaddhy, she's getting over it, poor thing! Indeed, I remember telling her last Easter, when she came to her duty, to eat oaten bread and butter with water-grass every morning, fasting; it cured myself of the same complaint."

"Why, thin, I'm very much obliged to your rev'rence for purscribin' for her," replied Phaddhy; "for, sure enough, she has neither pain nor ache at the present time, for the best rason in the world, docthor, that she'll be dead jist seven years, if God spares yer rev'rence an' myself till to-morrow fortnight, about five o'clock in the mornin'."

This was more than Father Philemy could stand with a good conscience, so, after getting himself out of the dilemma as well as he could, he shook Phaddhy again very cordially by the hand, saying, "Well, good-bye, Phaddhy, and God be good to poor Sarah's soul—I now remember her funeral, sure

[1] No fool.

enough, and a dacent one it was, for indeed she was a woman that had everybody's good word—and, between you and me, she made a happy death, that's as far as we can judge here; for, after all, there may be danger, Phaddhy, there may be danger, you understand—however, it's your own business, and your duty too, to think of that; but I believe you're not the man that would be apt to forget her."

"Phaddhy, ye thief o' the world," said Tim Dillon, when Father Philemy was gone, "there's no comin' up to ye; how could you make sich a fool of his rev'rence as to tell 'im that Katty was dead, an' that you had only four childher, an' you has eleven o' them, an' the wife in good health?"

"Why, jist, Tim," replied Phaddhy, with his usual shrewdness, "to tache his rev'rence himself to practise truth a little; if he didn't know that I got the stockin' of guineas and the Lisnaskey farm by my brother Barney's death, div ye think that he'd notish me at all, at all? — not himself, *avick;* an' maybe he won't be afther comin' round to me for a sack of my best oats, instead of the bushel I used to give him, and houldin' a couple of stations wid me every year."

"But won't he go mad when he hears you tould him nothing but lies?"

"Not now, Tim," answered Phaddhy—"not now; thank God, I'm not a poor man, an' he'll keep his temper. I'll warrant you the horsewhip won't be up now, although afore this I wouldn't say but it might—though, the poorest day I ever was, it's myself that wouldn't let a priest or friar lay a horsewhip to my back, an' that you know, Tim."

Phaddhy's sagacity, however, was correct; for, a short time after this conversation, Father Philemy, when collecting his oats, gave him a call, laughed heartily at the sham account of Katty's death, examined young Briney in his Latin, who was called after his uncle; pronounced him very cute, and likely to become a great scholar; promised his interest with the bishop to get him into Maynooth, and left the family, after having shaken hands with, and stroked down the heads of, all the children.

When Phaddhy, on the Sunday in question, heard the public notice given of the station about to be held in his house, notwithstanding his correct knowledge of Father Philemy's character, on which he looked with a competent

portion of contempt, he felt a warmth of pride about his heart that arose from the honour of having a station, and of entertaining the clergy in their official capacity, under his own roof and at his own expense, that gave him, he thought, a personal consequence which even the "stockin' of guineas" and the Lisnaskey farm were unable of themselves to confer upon him. He did enjoy, 'tis true, a very fair proportion of happiness on succeeding to his brother's property; but this would be a triumph over the envious and ill-natured remarks which several of his neighbours and distant relations had taken the liberty of indulging in against him on the occasion of his good fortune. He left the chapel, therefore, in good spirits; whilst Briney, on the contrary, hung a lip of more melancholy pendency than usual in dread apprehension of the examination that he expected to be inflicted on him by his reverence at the station.

Before I introduce the conversation which took place between Phaddhy and Briney as they went home on the subject of this literary ordeal, I must observe that there is a custom, hereditary in some Irish families, of calling fathers by their Christian names instead of by the usual appellation of "father." This usage was observed, not only by Phaddhy and his son, but by all the Phaddhys of that family generally. Their surname was Doran, but, in consequence of the great numbers in that part of the country who bore the same name, it was necessary, as of old, to distinguish the several branches of it by the Christian names of their fathers and grandfathers, and sometimes this distinction went as far back as the great grandfather. For instance, Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy meant Phaddhy, the son of Sheemus, the son of Phaddhy; and his son, Briney, was called Briney Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy, or *anglicè*, Bernard, the son of Patrick, the son of James, the son of Patrick. But the custom of children calling fathers, in a *vivâ voce* manner, by their Christian names, was independent of the other more general usage of the patronymic.

"Well, Briney," said Phaddhy, as the father and son returned home, cheek by jowl, from the chapel, "I suppose Father Philemy will go very deep in the Latin wid ye on Thursday; do ye think ye'll be able to answer him?"

"Why, Phaddhy," replied Briney, "how could I be able

to answer a clargy? — doesn't he know all the languages, and I'm only in the *Fibulæ Æsiopii* yet."

"Is that Latin or Greek, Briney?"

"It's Latin, Phaddhy."

"And what's the translation of that?"

"It signifies the Fables of Æsiopius."

"Bliss my sowl! and, Briney, did ye consther that out of yer own head?"

"Hogh! that's little of it. If ye war to hear me consther *Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock!"

"And, Briney, are ye in Greek at all yet?"

"No, Phaddhy, I'll not be in Greek till I'm in Virgil and Horace, and thin I'll be near finished."

"And how long will it be till that, Briney?"

"Why, Phaddhy, ye know I'm only a year and a half at the Latin, and in two years more I'll be in the Greek."

"Do ye think will ye ever be as larned as Father Philemy, Briney?"

"Don't ye know whin I'm a clargy I will; but I'm only a *lignum sacerdotis* yet, Phaddhy."

"What's *ligdum saucerdoatis*, Briney?"

"A block of a priest, Phaddhy."

"Now, Briney, I suppose Father Philemy knows everything?"

"Ay, to be sure he does; all the languages that's spoken through the world, Phaddhy."

"And must all the priests know them, Briney?—how many are they?"

"Seven—sartinly, every priest must know them, or how could they lay the divil if he'd spake to them in a tongue they couldn't understand, Phaddhy?"

"Ah, I declare, Briney, I see it now; ony for that, poor Father Philip—the heavens be his bed!—wouldn't be able to lay ould Warnock, that haunted Squire Sloethorn's stables."

"Is that when the two horses was stole, Phaddhy?"

"The very time, Briney; but, God be thanked, Father Philip settled him to the day of judgment."

"And where did he put him, Phaddhy?"

"Why, he wanted to be put anundher the hearth-stone; but Father Philip made him walk away with himself into a

thumb-bottle, and tied a stone to it, and then sent him to where he got a cooling, the thief, at the bottom of the lough behind the house."

"Well, I'll tell you what I'm thinking I'll be apt to do, Phaddhy, when I'm a clargy."

"And what is that, Briney?"

"Why, I'll—but, Phaddhy, don't be talking of this, bekase, if it should come to be known, I might get my brains knocked out by some of the heretics."

"Never fear, Briney; there's no danger of that. But what is it?"

"Why, I'll translate all the Protestants into asses, and then we'll get our hands red of them altogether."

"Well, that flogs for 'cuteness, and it's a wondher the clargy[1] doesn't do it, and them has the power; for 'twould give us pace entirely. But, Briney, will you spake in Latin to Father Philemy on Thursday?"

"To tell you the thruth, Phaddhy, I would rather he wouldn't examine me this bout, at all, at all."

"Ay, but you know we couldn't go agin him, Briney, bekase he promised to get you into the college. Will you spake some Latin now till I hear you?"

"Hem!—*Verbum personaley cohairit cum nomnatibo numbera at parsona at nuqumam sera yeast at bonis moras voia.*"

"Bless my heart!—and, Briney, where's that taken from?"

"From Syntax, Phaddhy."

"And who was Shintax—do you know, Briney?"

"He was a Roman, Phaddhy, bekase there's a Latin prayer in the beginning of the book."

"Ay, was he?—a priest, I'll warrant him. Well, Briney, do you mind yer Latin, and get on wid your larnin', and when you grow up you'll have a pair of boots, and a horse of your own (and a good broadcloth black coat, too) to ride on, every bit as good as Father Philemy's, and maybe betther nor Father Con's."

From this point, which usually wound up these colloquies between the father and son, the conversation usually diverged

[1] I have no hesitation in asserting that the bulk of the Irish peasantry really believe that the priests have this power.

into the more spacious fields of science; so that, by the time they reached home, Briney had probably given the father a learned dissertation upon the elevation of the clouds above the earth, and told him within how many thousand miles they approached it at their nearest point of approximation.

"Katty," said Phaddhy, when he got home, "we're to have a station here on Thursday next; 'twas given out from the altar to-day by Father Philemy."

"Oh, *wurrah, wurrah!*" exclaimed Katty, overwhelmed at the consciousness of her own incapacity to get up a dinner in sufficient style for such guests. "Phaddhy, *ahagur*, what on the livin' earth will we do, at all, at all? Why, we'll never be able to manage it."

"*Arrah*, why, Katty, woman—what do they want but their skinful to eat and dhrink, and I'm sure we're able to allow them that, anyway!"

"*Arrah*, bad manners to me, but you're enough to vex a saint—'their skinful to eat and dhrink!'—you common crathur, you, to spake that-a-way of the clargy, as if it was ourselves or the labourers you war spaking of."

"Ay, and aren't we every bit as good as they are, if you go to that?—haven't we sowls to be saved as well as themselves?"

"'As good as they are!' As good as the clargy!! *Manim a yea, agus a wurrah!*[1]—listen to what he says! Phaddhy, take care of yourself. You've got rich now; but, for all that, take care of yourself. You had better not bring the priest's ill-will or his bad heart upon us. You know they never thruv that had it; and maybe it's a short time your riches might stay wid you, or maybe it's a short time you might stay wid them. At any rate, God forgive you, and I hope He will, for makin' use of sich unsanctified words to your lawful clargy."

"Well, but what do you intind to do? or what do you think of getting for them?" inquired Phaddhy.

"Indeed, it's very little matther what I get for them, or what I'll do either—sorrow one of myself cares almost—for a man in his senses, that ought to know better, to make use of such low language about the blessed and holy crathurs, that

[1] My soul to God and the Virgin!

hasn't a stain of sin about them no more than the child unborn!"

"So you think?"

"So I think! ay, and it would be betther for you that you thought so too; but ye don't know what's before ye yet, Phaddhy; and now, take warnin' in time, and mend your life."

"Why, what do you see wrong in my life? Am I a drunkard? am I lazy? did ever I neglect my business? was I ever bad to you or to the childher? didn't I always give yees yer fill to ate, and kept yees as well clad as yer neighbours that was richer? don't I go on my knees, too, every night and morning?"

"That's true enough; but what signifies it all? When did ye cross a priest's foot to go to your duty? Not for the last five years, Phaddhy—not since poor Torly (God be good to him!) died of the mazles, and that'll be five years a fortnight before Christmas."

"And what are you the betther of all yer confessions? did they ever mend yer temper, *avourneen?* No, indeed, Katty, but you're ten times worse tempered coming back from the priest than before ye go to him."

"O Phaddhy! Phaddhy! God look down upon you this day, or any man that's in yer hardened state. I see there's no use in spaking to you, for you'll still be the ould cut."

"Ay, will I; so you may as well give up talking about it. *Arrah,* woman!" said Phaddhy, raising his voice, "who does it ever make betther—show me a man now, in all the neighbourhood, that's a pin-point the holier of it? Isn't there Jemmy Shields, that goes to his duty wanst a month, *malivogues* his wife and family this minute, and then claps them to a Rosary the next; but the ould boy's a thrifle to him of a fast day, afther coming from the priest. Betune ourselves, Katty, you're not much behind him."

Katty made no reply to this, but turned up her eyes and crossed herself at the wickedness of her unmanageable husband.

"Well, Briney," said she, turning abruptly to the son, "don't take patthern by that man, if you expect to do any good; let him be a warning to you to mind yer duty, and

respect yer clargy—and prepare yerself, now that I think of it, to go to Father Philemy or Father Con on Thursday. But don't be said or led by that man, for I'm sure I dunno how he intinds to face the Man above when he laves this world —and to keep from his duty, and to spake of his clargy as he does!"

There are few men without their weak sides. Phaddhy, although the priests were never very much his favourites, was determined to give what he himself called a let-out on this occasion, simply to show his ill-natured neighbours that, notwithstanding their unfriendly remarks, he knew "what it was to be dacent" as well as his betters; and Katty seconded him in his resolution, from her profound veneration for the clargy.

Every preparation was accordingly entered into, and every plan adopted, that could possibly be twisted into a capability of contributing to the entertainment of Fathers Philemy and Con.

One of those large round stercoraceous nosegays that, like many other wholesome plants, make up by odour what is wanting in floral beauty, and which lay rather too contagious, as Phaddhy expressed it, to the door of his house, was transplanted by about half a dozen labourers and as many barrows, in the course of a day or two, to a bed some yards distant from the spot of its first growth; because, without any reference whatsoever to the nasal sense, it was considered that it might be rather an eye-sore to their reverences on approaching the door. Several concave inequalities which constant attrition had worn in the earthen floor of the kitchen were filled up with blue clay, brought on a car from the bank of a neighbouring river for the purpose. The dresser, chairs, tables, pots, and pans all underwent a rigour of discipline, as if some remarkable event was about to occur; nothing less, it must be supposed, than a complete domestic revolution and a new state of things. Phaddhy himself cut two or three large furze bushes, and sticking them on the end of a pitch-fork, attempted to sweep down the chimney. For this purpose he mounted on the back of a chair, that he might be able to reach the top with more ease; but, in order that his footing might be firm, he made one of the servant-men sit

upon the chair to keep it steady during the operation. Unfortunately, however, it so happened that this man was needed to assist in removing a meal-chest to another part of the house; this was under Katty's superintendence, who, seeing the fellow sit rather more at his ease than she thought the hurry and importance of the occasion permitted, called him, with a little of her usual sharpness and energy, to assist in removing the chest. For some reason or other, which it is not necessary to mention here, the fellow bounced from his seat in obedience to the shrill tones of Katty, and the next moment Phaddhy (who was in a state of abstraction in the chimney, and totally unconscious of what was going forward below) made a descent decidedly contrary to the nature of that which most aspirants would be inclined to relish. A severe stun, however, was the most serious injury he received on his own part, and several round oaths, with a good drubbing, fell to the servant; but unluckily he left the furze bush behind him in the highest and narrowest part of the chimney; and were it not that an active fellow succeeded in dragging it up from the outside of the roof, the chimney ran considerable risk, as Katty said, of being choked.

But along with the lustration which every fixture within the house was obliged to undergo, it was necessary that all the youngsters should get new clothes; and for this purpose Jemmy Lynch, the tailor, with his two journeymen and three apprentices, were sent for in all haste, that he might fit Phaddhy and each of his six sons in suits, from a piece of home-made frieze, which Katty did not intend to break up till "toardst Christmas."

A station is no common event, and accordingly the web was cut up, and the tailor left a wedding-suit half made, belonging to Edy Dolan, a thin old bachelor, who took it into his head to try his hand at becoming a husband ere he'd die. As soon as Jemmy and his train arrived, a door was taken off the hinges, and laid on the floor, for himself to sit upon, and a new drugget quilt was spread beside it for his journeymen and apprentices. With nimble fingers they plied the needle and thread, and when night came a turf was got, into which was stuck a piece of rod, pointed at one end and split at the other; the "white candle," slipped into a shaving of the

fringe that was placed in the cleft end of the stick, was then lit, whilst many a pleasant story, told by Jemmy, who had been once in Dublin for six weeks, delighted the circle of lookers-on that sat around them.

At length the day previous to the important one arrived. Hitherto all hands had contributed to make everything in and about the house look "dacent;" scouring, washing, sweeping, pairing, and repairing had been all disposed of. The boys got their hair cut to the quick with the tailor's scissors; and such of the girls as were not full grown got only that which grew on the upper part of the head taken off by a cut somewhat resembling the clerical tonsure, so that they looked extremely wild and unsettled with their straight locks projecting over their ears. Everything, therefore, of the less important arrangements had been gone through; but the weighty and momentous concern was as yet unsettled.

This was the feast! and, alas! never was the want of experience more strongly felt than here. Katty was a bad cook, even to a proverb, and bore so indifferent a character in the country for cleanliness that very few would undertake to eat her butter; indeed, she was called Katty Sallagh [1] on this account. However, this prejudice, whether ill or well founded, was wearing fast away since Phaddhy had succeeded to the stocking of guineas and the Lisnaskey farm. It might be, indeed, that her former poverty helped her neighbours to see this blemish more clearly; but the world is so seldom in the habit of judging people's qualities or failings through this medium that the supposition is rather doubtful. Be this as it may, the arrangements for the breakfast and dinner must be made. There was plenty of bacon, and abundance of cabbages—eggs *ad infinitum*—oaten and wheaten bread in piles—turkeys, geese, pullets, as fat as aldermen—cream as rich as Crœsus—and three gallons of poteen, one sparkle of which, as Father Philemy said in the course of the evening, would lay the hairs on St. Francis himself in his most self-negative mood if he saw it. So far so good; everything excellent and abundant in its way. Still the higher and more refined items—the *deliciæ epularum*—must be added. White

[1] Dirty Katty.

bread, and tea, and sugar were yet to be got; and lump-sugar for the punch; and a teapot and cups and saucers to be borrowed—and what else? Let me see. Yes; there was boxty bread to be made, to take, if they liked, with their tea; and for this purpose a number of raw-peeled potatoes were ground upon the rough side of a tin colander, and afterwards put into a sheet (for table-cloths they had none), which was twisted in contrary directions by two of the stoutest men about the house, until it was shrunk up into a round hard lump in the middle and made quite dry; it was then taken and (being mixed with a little flour and some of Katty's questionable butter) formed into flat cakes, and baked upon the griddle.

Well, suppose all things disposed for to-morrow's feast—suppose Phaddhy himself to have butchered the fowl, because Katty, who was not able to bear the sight of blood, had not the heart to kill "the crathurs;" and imagine to yourself one of the servant-men taking his red-hot tongs out of the fire, and squeezing a large lump of hog's lard, placed in a grisset, or "kam," on the hearth, to grease all their brogues; then see in your mind's eye those two fine, fresh-looking girls slyly taking their old rusty fork out of the fire, and going to a bit of three-cornered looking-glass pasted into a board, or perhaps to a pail of water, there to curl up their rich-flowing locks, that had hitherto never known a curl but such as nature gave them.

On one side of the hob sit two striplings, "thryin' wan another in their catechise," that they may be able to answer, with some credit, to-morrow. On the other hob sits Briney, hard at his Syntax, with the *Fibulæ Æsiopii*, as he called it, placed open at a particular passage on the seat under him, with a hope that, when Father Philemy will examine him, the book may open at his favourite fable of the *Gallus Gallinaceus*, "a dunghill cock." Phaddhy himself is obliged to fast this day, there being one day of his penance yet unperformed since the last time he was at his duty, which was, as aforesaid, about five years; and Katty, now that everything is cleaned up and ready, kneels down in a corner to go over her beads, rocking herself in a placid silence that is only broken by an occasional malediction against the servants, or the cat when it attempts the abduction of one of the dead fowl.

The next morning the family were up before the sun, who rubbed his eyes, and swore that he must have overslept himself on seeing such a merry column of smoke dancing over Phaddhy's chimney. A large wooden dish was placed upon the threshold of the kitchen door filled with water, in which, with a trencher of oatmeal for soap, they successively scrubbed their faces and hands to some purpose.[1] In a short time afterwards Phaddhy and the sons were cased, stiff and awkward, in their new suits, with the tops of their fingers just peeping over the sleeve cuffs. The horses in the stable were turned out to the fields, being obliged to make room for their betters that were soon expected under the reverend bodies of Father Philemy and his curate; whilst about half a bushel of oats was left in the manger to regale them on their arrival. Little Richard Maguire was sent down to the five-acres with the pigs, on purpose to keep them from about the house, they not being supposed fit company at a set dinner. A roaring turf fire, which blazed two yards up the chimney, had been put down; on this was placed a large pot filled with water for the tea, because they had no kettle.

By this time the morning was tolerably advanced, and the neighbours were beginning to arrive in twos and threes to wipe out old scores. Katty had sent several of the *gorsoons* "to see if they could see any sight of the clargy," but hitherto their reverences were invisible. At length, after several fruitless embassies of this description, Father Con was seen jogging along on his easy-going hack, engaged in the perusal of his Office previous to his commencing the duties of the day. As soon as his approach was announced, a chair was immediately placed for him in a room off the kitchen—the parlour, such as it was, having been reserved for Father Philemy himself as the place of greater honour. This was an arrangement, however, which went against the grain of Phaddhy, who, had he got his will, would have established Father Con in the most comfortable apartment of the house; but that old vagabond, human nature, is the same under all circumstances—or, as Katty would have (in her own phraseology) expressed it, "still the ould cut"—for even there the influence of rank and

[1] Oatmeal was commonly used where soap could not be obtained.

elevation was sufficient to throw merit into the shade; and the parlour seat was allotted to Father Philemy, merely for being parish priest, although it was well known that he could not "tare off" mass in half the time that Father Con could; could not throw a sledge or shoulder-stone within a perch of him, nor scarcely clear a street channel, whilst the latter could jump one-and-twenty feet at a running leap. But these are rubs which men of merit must occasionally bear, and, when exposed to them, they must only rest satisfied in the consciousness of their own deserts.

From the moment that Father Con became visible the conversation of those who were collected in Phaddhy's dropped gradually, as he approached the house, into a silence which was only broken by an occasional short observation, made by one or two of those who were in habits of the greatest familiarity with the priest; but, when they heard the noise of his horse's feet near the door, the silence became general and uninterrupted.

When Father Con arrived, Phaddhy and Katty were instantly at the door to welcome him.

"*Musha, cead milliah failtha ghud* to our house, Father Con, *avourneen!*" said Katty, dropping him a low curtsy, and spreading her new brown quilted petticoat as far out on each side of her as it would go. "*Musha,* and it's you that's welcome from my heart out."

"I thank you," said honest Con, who, as he knew not her name, did not pretend to know it.

"Well, Father Con," said Phaddhy, "this is the first time you have ever come to us this-a-way; but, plase God, it won't be the last, I hope."

"I hope not, Phaddhy," said Father Con, who, notwithstanding his simplicity of character, loved a good dinner in the very core of his heart—"I hope not, indeed, Phaddhy."

He then threw his eye about the premises, to see what point he might set his temper to during the remainder of the day; for it is right to inform our readers that a priest's temper at a station generally rises or falls according to the prospect of his cheer.

Here, however, a little vista, or pantry, jutting out from the kitchen, and left ostentatiously open, presented him with

a view which made his very nose curl with kindness. What it contained we do not pretend to say, not having seen it ourselves; we judge, therefore, only by its effects upon his physiognomy.

"Why, Phaddhy," he says, "this is a very fine house you've got over you," throwing his eye again towards a wooden buttress which supported one of the rafters that was broken.

"Why, then, your riverence, it would not be a bad one," Phaddhy replied, "if it had a new roof and new side-walls; and I intend to get both next summer, if God spares me till then."

"Then, upon my word, if it had new side-walls, a new roof, and new gavels too," replied Father Con, "it would certainly look a great deal the better for it; and do you intend to get them next summer, Phaddhy?"

"If God spares me, sir."

"Are all these fine *gorsoons* yours, Phaddhy?"

"Why, so Katty says, your reverence," replied Phaddhy, with a good-humoured laugh.

"Haven't you got one of them for the Church, Phaddhy?"

"Yes, your reverence; there's one of them that I hope will live to have the "robes" upon him. Come over, Briney, and speak to Father Con. He's not very far in his Latin yet, sir; but his master tells me that he hasn't the likes of him in his school for brightness. Briney, will you come over, I say; come over, sirrah, and spake to the gintleman, and him wants to shake hands wid you—come up, man, what are you afeard of?—sure, Father Con's not going to examine you now."

"No, no, Briney," said Father Con, "I'm not about to examine you at present."

"He's a little dashed, yer reverence, bekase he thought you war going to put him through some of his Latin," said the father, bringing him up like a culprit to Father Con, who shook hands with him, and, after a few questions as to the books he read, and his progress, dismissed him.

"But, Father Con, wid submission," said Katty, "where's Father Philemy from us?—sure, we expected him along wid you, and he wouldn't go to disappoint us."

"Oh, you needn't fear that, Katty," replied Father Con—"he'll be here presently—before breakfast, I'll engage for

him, at any rate; but he had a touch of a headache this morning, and wasn't able to rise so early as I was."

During this conversation a little crowd collected about the door of the room in which he was to hear the confessions, each struggling and fighting to get the first turn; but here, as in the more important concerns of this world, the weakest went to the wall. He now went into the room, and taking Katty herself first, the door was closed upon them, and he gave her absolution; and thus he continued to confess and absolve them, one by one, until breakfast.

Whenever a station occurs in Ireland, a crowd of mendicants and other strolling impostors seldom fail to attend it; on this occasion, at least, they did not. The day, though frosty, was fine; and the door was surrounded by a train of this description, including both sexes, some sitting on stones, some on stools, with their blankets rolled up under them; and others, more ostensibly devout, on their knees, hard at prayer, which, lest their piety might escape notice, our readers may be assured they did not offer up in silence. On one side you might observe a sturdy fellow, with a pair of tattered urchins secured to his back by a sheet or blanket pinned across his breast with a long iron skewer, their heads just visible at his shoulders, munching a thick piece of wheaten bread, and the father on his knees, with a huge wooden cross in his hand, repeating his *padereens,* and occasionally throwing a jolly eye towards the door, or, through the window opposite which he knelt, into the kitchen, as often as any peculiar stir or commotion led him to suppose that breakfast, the loadstar of his devotion, was about to be produced.

Scattered about the door were knots of these, men and women, occasionally chatting together, and, when the subject of their conversation happened to be exhausted, resuming their beads until some new topic would occur, and so on alternately.

The interior of the kitchen, where the neighbours were assembled, presented an appearance somewhat more decorous. Andy Lawlor, the mass-server, in whom the priest had the greatest confidence, stood in a corner, examining in their catechism those who intended to confess; and if they were able to stand the test, he gave them a bit of twisted brown paper as a ticket, and they were received at the tribunal.

It was curious to remark the ludicrous expression of temporary sanctity which was apparent on the countenances of many young men and maidens who were remarkable in the neighbourhood for attending dances and wakes, but who on the present occasion were sobered down to a gravity which sat very awkwardly upon them, particularly in the eyes of those who knew the lightness and drollery of their characters. This, however, was observable only before confession; for, as soon as "the priest's blessed hand had been over them," their gloom and anxiety passed away, and the thoughtless buoyancy of their natural disposition resumed its influence over their minds. A good-humoured nod or a sly wink from a young man to his female acquaintance would now be indulged in; or perhaps a small joke would escape, which seldom failed to produce a subdued laugh from such as had confessed, or an impatient rebuke from those who had not.

"Tim!" one would exclaim, "aren't ye ashamed or afeard to get an that-a-way, and his reverence undher the wan roof wid ye?"

"Tim, you had better dhrop your joking," a second would observe, "and not be putting us through other,[1] wherein we have our offinces to rememberer; you have got your job over, and now you have nothing to trouble you."

"Indeed, it's fine behaviour," a third would say, "and you afther coming from the priest's knee, and, what is more, didn't resave[2] yet; but wait till Father Con appears, and I'll warrant you'll be as grave as another, for all you're so stout now."

The conversation would then pass to the merits of Father Philemy and Father Con as confessors.

"Well," one would observe, "for my part I'd rather go to Father Philemy fifty times over than wanst to Father Con, bekase he never axes questions; but whatever you like to tell him he hears it, and forgives you at wanst."

"And so sign's an it," observed another, "he could confess more in a day than Father Con could in a week."

"But, for all that," observed Andy Lawlor, "it's still best to go to the man that puts the questions, you persave, and

[1] Into confusion. [2] That is, receive the sacrament.

that won't let the turning of a straw escape him. Whin myself goes to Father Philemy, somehow or other, I totally disremember more nor wan half of what I intinded to tell him; but Father Con misses nothing, for he axes it."

When the last observation was finished, Father Con, finding that the usual hour for breakfast had arrived, came into the kitchen to prepare for the celebration of mass. For this purpose a table was cleared, and just in the nick of time arrived old Moll Brian, the vestment woman, or itinerant sacristan, whose usual occupation was to carry the priests' robes and other apparatus from station to station. In a short time Father Con was surpliced and robed; Andy Lawlor, whose face was charged with commensurate importance during the ceremony, served mass, and answered the priest stoutly in Latin, although he had not the advantage of understanding that sacerdotal language. Those who had confessed now communicated; after which each of them took a draught of water out of a small jug which was handed round from one to another. The ceremony then closed, and those who had partaken of the sacrament, with the exception of such as were detained for breakfast, after filling their bottles with holy water, went home with a light heart. A little before the mass had been finished Father Philemy arrived; but, as Phaddhy and Katty were then preparing to receive, they could not at that moment give him a formal reception. As soon, however, as communion was over, the *cead milliah failtah* was repeated with the usual warmth by both, and by all their immediate friends.

Breakfast was now laid in Katty's best style, and with an originality of arrangement that scorned all precedent. Two tables were placed, one after another, in the kitchen; for the other rooms were not sufficiently large to accommodate the company. Father Philemy filled the seat of honour at the head of the table, with his back to an immense fire. On his right hand sat Father Con; on his left, Phaddhy himself, "to keep the clargy in company;" and, in due succession after them, their friends and neighbours, each taking precedence according to the most scrupulous notions of respectability. Beside Father Con sat Pether Malone, a "young collegian," who had been sent home from Maynooth

to try his native air for the recovery of his health, which was declining. He arrived only a few minutes after Father Philemy, and was a welcome reinforcement to Phaddhy in the arduous task of sustaining the conversation with suitable credit.

With respect to the breakfast I can only say that it was superabundant—that the tea was as black as bog water—that there were hen, turkey, and geese eggs—plates of toast soaked, crust and crumb, in butter, and, lest there might be a deficiency, one of the daughters sat on a stool at the fire, with her open hand, by way of a fire-screen, across her red, half-scorched brows, toasting another plateful; and, to crown all, on each corner of the table was a bottle of whisky. At the lower board sat the youngsters, under the *surveillance* of Katty's sister, who presided in that quarter. When they were commencing breakfast, "Father Philemy," said Katty, "won't yer rev'rence bless the mate,[1] if ye plase?"

"If I don't do it myself," said Father Philemy, who was just after sweeping the top off a turkey egg, "I'll get them that will. Come," said he to the collegian, "give us grace, Peter; you'll never learn younger."

This, however, was an unexpected blow to Peter, who knew that an English grace would be incompatible with his "college breeding," yet was unprovided with any in Latin. The eyes of the company were now fixed upon him, and he blushed like scarlet on finding himself in a predicament so awkward and embarrassing. "*Aliquid, Petre, aliquid; 'de profundis'—si habes nihil aliud,*" said Father Philemy, feeling for his embarrassment, and giving him a hint. This was not lost, for Peter began, and gave them the *De profundis*, a Latin psalm which Roman Catholics repeat for the relief of the souls in purgatory. They forgot, however, that there was a person in the company who considered himself as having an equal claim to the repetition of at least the one-half of it; and accordingly, when Peter got up and repeated the first verse, Andy Lawlor got also on his legs and repeated the response.[2] This staggered Peter a little, who hesitated, as uncertain how to act.

[1] Used in the sense of food generally.

[2] This prayer is generally repeated by two persons.

"*Perge, Petre, Perge,*" said Father Philemy, looking rather wistfully at his egg—"*Perge, stultus est et asinus quoque.*" Peter and Andy proceeded until it was finished, when they resumed their seats.

The conversation during breakfast was as sprightly, as full of fun and humour, as such breakfasts usually are. The priest, Phaddhy, and the young collegian had a topic of their own, whilst the rest were engaged in a kind of by-play until the meal was finished.

"Father Philemy," said Phaddhy, in his capacity of host, "before we begin we'll all take a dhrop of what's in the bottle, if it's not displasing to yer reverence; and, sure, I know 'tis the same doesn't come wrong at a station, anyhow."

Hitherto Father Philemy had not had time to bestow any attention on the state of Katty's larder, as he was in the habit of doing, with a view to ascertain the several items contained therein for dinner. But as soon as the breakfast things were removed, and the coast clear, he took a peep into the pantry, and, after throwing his eye over its contents, sat down at the fire, making Phaddhy take a seat beside him, for the especial purpose of sounding him as to the practicability of effecting a certain design which was then snugly latent in his reverence's fancy. The fact was, that on taking the survey of the premises aforesaid, he discovered that, although there was abundance of fowl, and fish, and bacon, and hung-beef, yet, by some unaccountable and disastrous omission, there was neither fresh mutton nor fresh beef. The priest, it must be confessed, was a man of considerable fortitude, but this was a blow for which he was scarcely prepared—particularly as a boiled leg of mutton was one of his fifteen favourite joints at dinner. He accordingly took two or three pinches of snuff in rapid succession, and a seat at the fire, as I have said, placing Phaddhy, unconscious of his design, immediately beside him.

Now, the reader knows that Phaddhy was a man possessing a considerable portion of dry, sarcastic humour, along with that natural quickness of penetration and shrewdness for which most of the Irish peasantry are, in a very peculiar degree, remarkable; add to this that Father Philemy, in

consequence of his contemptuous bearing to him before he came in for his brother's property, stood not very high in his estimation. The priest knew this, and consequently felt that the point in question would require to be managed, on his part, with suitable address.

"Phaddhy," says his reverence, "sit down here till we chat a little, before I commence the duties of the day. I'm happy to see that you have such a fine thriving family; how many sons and daughters have you?"

"Six sons, yer reverence," replied Phaddhy, "and five daughters—indeed, sir, they're as well to be seen as their neighbours, considhering all things. Poor crathurs, they get fair play[1] now, thank God, compared to what they used to get—God rest their poor uncle's sowl for that. Only for him, your reverence, there would be very few inquiring this or any other day about them."

"Did he die as rich as they said, Phaddhy?" inquired his reverence.

"Hut, sir," replied Phaddhy, determined to take what he afterwards called a "rise" out of the priest, "they knew little about it—as rich as they said, sir! no, but three times as rich itself; but, anyhow, he was the man that could make the money."

"I'm very happy to hear it, Phaddhy, on your account and that of your children. God be good to him—*requiescat animus ejus in pace, per omnia secula seculorum, Amen!*—he liked a drop in his time, Phaddhy, as well as ourselves, eh?"

"*Amen, amen*—the heavens be his bed!—he did, poor man! but he had it at first cost, your reverence, for he run it all himself in the mountains—he could afford to take it."

"Yes, Phaddhy, the heavens be his bed, I pray; no Christmas or Easter ever passed but he was sure to send me the little keg of stuff that never saw water; but, Phaddhy, there's one thing that concerns me about him, in regard of his love of drink—I'm afraid it's a trouble to him where he is at present; and I was sorry to find that, although he died full of money, he didn't think it worth his while to leave even the price of a mass to be said for the benefit of his own soul."

[1] By this is meant good food and clothing.

"Why, sure, you know, Father Philemy, that he wasn't what they call a dhrinking man: once a quarther, or so, he sartinly did take a jorum; and, except at these times, he was very sober. But God look upon us both, yer reverence —or upon myself, anyway; for I haven't yer excuse for dhrinking, seeing I'm no clargy; but if *he's* to suffer for his doings that-a-way, I'm afeard *we'll* have a troublesome reck'ning of it."

"Hem, a-hem!—Phaddhy," replied the priest, "he has raised you and your children from poverty, at all events, and you ought to consider that. If there is anything in your power to contribute to the relief of his soul, you have a strong duty upon you to do it; and a number of masses, offered up devoutly, would——"

"Why, he did, sir, raise both myself and my childher from poverty," said Phaddhy, not willing to let that point go farther—"that I'll always own to; and I hope in God that whatever little trouble might be upon him for the dhrop of dhrink, will be wiped off by this kindness to us."

"He hadn't even a month's mind!"[1]

"And it's not but I spoke to him about both, yer reverence."

"And what did he say, Phaddhy?"

"'Phaddhy,' said he, 'I have been giving Father M'Guirk, one way or another, between whisky, oats, and dues, a great deal of money every year; and now, afther I'm dead,' says he, 'isn't it an ungrateful thing of him not to offer up one mass for my sowl, except I leave him payment for it.'"

"Did he say that, Phaddhy?"

"I'm giving you his very words, yer reverence."

"Phaddhy, I deny it; it's a big lie—he could not make use of such words, and he going to face death. I say you could not listen to them; the hair would stand on your head if he did—but God forgive him!—that's the worst I wish him. Didn't the hair stand on your head, Phaddhy, to hear him?"

"Why, then, to tell yer reverence God's truth, I can't say it did."

"You can't say it did! and if I was in your coat, I would

[1] See note to a previous story.—Ed.

be ashamed to say it did not. I was always troubled about the way the fellow died, but I hadn't the slightest notion that he went off such a reprobate. I fought his battle and yours hard enough yesterday; but I knew less about him then than I do now."

"And what, wid submission, did you fight our battles about, yer reverence?" inquired Phaddhy.

"Yesterday evening, in Parrah More Slevin's, they had him a miser, and yourself they set down as very little better."

"Then I don't think I desarved that from Parrah More, anyhow, Father Philemy; I think I can show myself as dacent as Parrah More or any of his faction."

"It was not Parrah More himself or his family that said anything about you, Phaddhy," said the priest, "but others that were present. You must know that we were all to be starved here to-day."

"Oh! oh!" exclaimed Phaddhy, who was hit most palpably upon the weakest side—the very sorest spot about him, "they think, bekase this is the first station that ever was held in my house, that you won't be thrated as you ought; but they'll be disappointed; and I hope, for so far, that yer reverence and yer friends had no rason to complain."

"Not in the least, Phaddhy, considering that it was a first station; and if the dinner goes off as well as the breakfast, they'll be biting their nails: but I should not wish myself that they would have it in their power to sneer or throw any slur over you about it.—Go along, Dolan," exclaimed his reverence to a countryman who came in from the street, where those stood who were for confession, to see if he had gone to his room; "go along, you vagrant, don't you see I'm not gone to the tribunal yet?—But it's no matter about that, Phaddhy; it's of other things you ought to think—when were you at your duty?

"This morning, sir," replied the other—"but I'd have them to understand that had the presumption to use my name in any such manner that I know when and where to be dacent with any mother's son of Parrah More's faction; and that I'll be afther whispering to them some of these mornings, plase goodness."

"Well, well, Phaddhy, don't put yourself in a passion about it, particularly so soon after having been at confession—it's not right. I told them myself that we'd have a leg of mutton and a bottle of wine at all events, for that was what they had; but that's not worth talking about—when were you with the priest before, Phaddhy?"

"If I wasn't able, it would be another thing; but, as long as I'm able, I'll let them know that I have the spirit," said Phaddhy, smarting under the imputation of niggardliness. "When was I at confession before, Father Philemy? Why, then, dear forgive me, not these five years—and I'd surely be the first of the family that would show a mane spirit or a want of hospitality."

"A leg of mutton is a good dish, and a bottle of wine is fit for the first man in the land!" observed his reverence —"five years!—why, is it possible you stayed away so long, Phaddhy?—how could you expect to prosper with five years' burden of sin upon your conscience—what would it cost you——?"

"Indeed, myself's no judge, your rev'rence, as to that; but, cost what it will, I'll get both."

"I say, Phaddhy, what trouble would it cost you to come to your duty twice a year at the very least; and indeed I would advise you to become a monthly communicant. Parrah More was speaking of it as to himself, and you ought to go——"

"And I will go and bring Parrah More here to his dinner this very day, if it was only to let him see with his own eyes——"

"You ought to go once a month, if it was only to set an example to your children, and to show the neighbours how a man of substance and respectability, and the head of a family, ought to carry himself."

"Where is the best wine got, yer rev'rence?"

"Alick M'Loughlin, my nephew, I believe, keeps the best wine and spirits in Ballyslantha. You ought also, Phaddhy, to get a scapular, and become a scapularian; I wish your brother had thought of that, and he wouldn't have died in so hardened a state, nor neglected to make a provision for the benefit of his soul, as he did."

"Lave the rest to me, yer rev'rence, I'll get it—Mr. M'Loughlin will give me the right sort, if he has it betune him and death."

"M'Loughlin! what are you talking about?"

"Why, what is your rev'rence talking about?"

"The scapular," said the priest.

"But I mane the wine and the mutton," says Phaddhy.

"And is that the way you treat me, you reprobate, you?" replied his reverence, in a passion; "is that the kind of attention you're paying me, and I advising you, all this time, for the good of your soul? Phaddhy, I tell you, you're enough to vex me to the core—five years!—only once at confession in five years! What do I care about your mutton and your wine!—you may get dozens of them if you wish; or maybe it would be more like a Christian to never mind them, and let the neighbours laugh away; it would teach you humility, you hardened creature, and God knows you want it. For my part, I'm speaking to you about other things; but that's the way with the most of you—mention any spiritual subject that concerns your soul, and you turn a deaf ear to it. —Here, Dolan, come in to your duty.—In the meantime you may as well tell Katty not to boil the mutton too much—it's on your knees you ought to be at your rosary or the seven penitential psalms."

"Thrue for you, sir," said Phaddhy; "but as to going wanst a month, I'm afeard, yer rev'rence, if it would shorten my timper as it does Katty's, that we'd be bad company for one another; she comes home from confession newly set, like a razor, every bit as sharp, and I'm sure that I'm within the truth when I say there's no bearing her."

"That's because you have no relish for anything spiritual yourself, you nager, you," replied his reverence, "or you wouldn't see her temper in that light. But, now that I think of it, where did you get that stuff we had at breakfast?"

"Ay, that's the sacret; but I knew yer rev'rence would like it. Did Parrah More equal it? No, nor one of his faction couldn't lay his finger on such a dhrop."

"I wish you could get me a few gallons of it," said the priest. "But let us dhrop that—I say, Phaddhy, you're too worldly and careless about your duty."

"Well, Father Philemy, there's a good time coming; I'll mend yet."

"You want it, Phaddhy."

"Would three gallons do, sir?"

"I would rather you would give me five, Phaddhy; but go to your rosary."

"It's the penitential psalm, first, sir," said Phaddhy, "and the rosary at night. I'll try, anyhow; and if I can make off five for you, I will."

"Thank you, Phaddhy; but I would recommend you to say the rosary before night."

"I believe your reverence is right," replied Phaddhy, looking somewhat slyly in the priest's face; "I think it's best to make sure of it now, in regard that in the evening your reverence—do you persave?"

"Yes," said his reverence, "you're in a better frame of mind at present, Phaddhy, being fresh from confession." So saying, his reverence, for whom Phaddhy, with all his shrewdness in general, was not a match, went into his room, that he might send home about four dozen of honest, good-humoured, thoughtless, jovial, swearing, drinking, fighting, and murdering Hibernians, free from every possible stain of sin and wickedness!

"Are you all ready now?" said the priest to a crowd of country people who were standing about the kitchen door, pressing to get the "first turn" at the tribunal, which, on this occasion, consisted of a good oak chair with his reverence upon it.

"Why do you crush forward in that manner, you ill-bred *spalpeens?* Can't you stand back and behave yourselves like common Christians?—back with you, or if you make me get my whip, I'll soon clear you from about the dacent man's door. Hagarty, why do you crush them two girls there, you great Turk, you? Look at the vagabonds! Where's my whip?" said he, running in, and coming out in a fury, when he commenced cutting about him, until they dispersed in all directions. He then returned into the house; and, after calling in about two dozen, began to catechise them as follows, still holding the whip in his hand, whilst many of those individuals, who, at a party quarrel in fair or market, or in the

more inhuman crimes of murder or nightly depredations, were as callous and hardened specimens of humanity as ever set the laws of civilised society at defiance, stood trembling before him like slaves, absolutely pale and breathless with fear.

"Come, Kelly," said he to one of them, "are you fully prepared for the two blessed sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, that you are about to receive? Can you read, sir?"

"Can I read, is id?—my brother Barney can, yer reverence," replied Kelly, sensible, amid all the disadvantages around him, of the degradation of his ignorance.

"What's that to me, sir," said the priest, "what your brother Barney can do?—can you not read yourself? And maybe," he continued parenthetically, "your brother Barney's not much the holier for his knowledge."

"I cannot, yer reverence," said Kelly, in a tone of regret.

"I hope you have your Christian Doctrine, at all events," said the priest. "Go on with the Confiteor."

Kelly went on—"*Confeetur Dimniportenti batchy Mary semplar virginy, batchy Mickletoe Archy Angelo batchy Johnny Bartisty, sanctris postlis—Petrum hit Paulum, omnium sanctris, et tabby, pasture quay a pixavit minus coglety ashy hony verbum et offer him smaxy quilta smaxy quilta smaxy maxin in quilta.*" [1]

"Very well, Kelly—right enough, all except the pronouncing, which wouldn't pass muster in Maynooth, however. How many kinds of commandments are there?"

"Two, sir."

"What are they?"

"God's and the Church's."

"Repeat God's share of them."

He then repeated the first commandment according to his catechism.

"Very good, Kelly, very good. Now, you must know that

[1] I subjoin the original for the information of my readers:—"Confiteor Deo Omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ, semper Virgini, beato Michælo Archangelo, beato Johanni Baptistæ, sanctis Apostolis Petro et Paulo, omnibus sanctis, et tibi, Pater, quia, peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo, et opera, mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa." Let not my readers suppose that the above version in the mouth of a totally illiterate peasant is overcharged, for I have the advantage of remembering how I myself used to hear it pronounced in my early days.

the heretics split that into two, for no other reason in the world only to knock our blessed images on the head; but we needn't expect them to have much conscience. Well, now repeat the commandments of the Church."

"First—Sundays and holidays, Mass thou shalt sartinly hear;
Second—All holidays sanctificate throughout all the whole year.
Third—Lent, Ember-days, and Virgils, thou shalt be sartin to fast;
Fourth—Fridays and Saturdays flesh thou shalt not, good, bad, or indifferent, taste.
Fifth—In Lent and Advent, nuptial fastes gallantly forbear;
Sixth—Confess your sins, at laste once dacently and soberly every year.
Seventh—Receive your God at confission about great Easter-day;
Eighth—And to his Church and his own frolicsome clargy neglect not tides to pay."

"Well," said his reverence, "now, the great point is, do you understand them?"

"Wid the help of God I hope so, yer rev'rence; and I have also the three thriptological vartues."

"Theological, sirrah!"

"Theojollyological vartues; the four sins that cry to heaven for vingeance; the five carnal vartues—prudence, justice, timptation, and solitude;[1] the six holy Christian gifts; the seven deadly sins; the eight grey attitudes——"

"Grey attitudes! Oh, the Bœotian!" exclaimed his reverence; "listen to the way in which he's playing havoc among them. Stop, sir!" for Kelly was going on at full speed—"stop, sir! I till you it's not grey attitudes, but bay attitudes. Doesn't every one know the eight beatitudes?"

"The eight bay attitudes; the nine ways of being guilty of another's sins; the ten commandments; the twelve fruits of a Christian; the fourteen stations of the cross; the fifteen mystheries of the passion——"

"Kelly," said his reverence, interrupting him, and heralding the joke, for so it was intended, with a hearty chuckle, "you're getting fast out of your teens, *ma bouchal!*" and this was, of course, honoured with a merry peal, extorted as much by an effort at softening the rigour of examination as by the traditionary duty which entails upon the Irish laity the neces-

[1] Temperance and fortitude.

sity of laughing at a priest's jokes without any reference at all to their quality. Nor was his reverence's own voice the first to subside into that gravity which became the solemnity of the occasion; for even whilst he continued the interrogatories his eye was laughing at the conceit with which it was evident the inner man was not competent to grapple. "Well, Kelly, I can't say but you've answered very well as far as the repeating of them goes; but do you perfectly understand all the commandments of the Church?"

"I do, sir," replied Kelly, whose confidence kept pace with his reverence's good-humour.

"Well, what is meant by the fifth?"

"The fifth, sir," said the other, rather confounded—"I must begin agin, sir, and go on till I come to it."

"Well," said the priest, "never mind that; but tell us what the eighth means?"

Kelly stared at him a second time, but was not able to advance. "First—Sundays and holidays, Mass thou shalt hear;" but, before he had proceeded to the second, a person who stood at his elbow began to whisper to him the proper reply, and, in the act of doing so, received a lash of the whip across the ear for his pains.

"You blackguard, you!" exclaimed Father Philemy, "take that. How dare you attempt to prompt any person that I'm examining?"

Those who stood round Kelly now fell back to a safe distance, and all was silence, terror, and trepidation once more.

"Come, Kelly, go on—the eighth?"

Kelly was still silent.

"Why, you ninny, you, didn't you repeat it just now. 'Eighth—And to his Church neglect not tithes to pay.' Now that I have put the words in your mouth, what does it mean?"

Kelly, having thus got the cue, replied in the words of the catechism, "To pay tides to the lawful pasterns of the Church, sir."

"Pasterns!—oh, you ass, you—pasterns! You poor, base, contemptible, crawling reptile; as if we trampled you under our hooves—oh, you scruff of the earth! Stop, I say—it's pastors."

"Pasthors of the Church."

"And tell me, do you fulfil that commandment?'

"I do, sir."

"It's a lie, sir," replied the priest, brandishing the whip over his head, whilst Kelly instinctively threw up his guard to protect himself from the blow. "It's a lie, sir," repeated his reverence; "you don't fulfil it. What is the Church?"

"The Church is the congregation of the faithful that purfiss the true faith, and are obadient to the pope."

"And who do you pay your tithes to?"

"To the parson, sir."

"And, you poor varmint, you, is he obadient to the pope?"

Kelly only smiled at the want of comprehension which prevented him from seeing the thing according to the view which his reverence took of it.

"Well, now," continued Father Philemy, "who are the lawful pastors of God's Church?"

"You are, sir, and all our own priests."

"And who ought you to pay your tithes to?"

"To you, sir, in coorse; sure, I always knew that, yer rev'rence."

"And what's the reason, then, you don't pay them to me instead of the parson?"

This was a puzzler to Kelly, who only knew his own side of the question. "You have me there, sir," he replied, with a grin.

"Because," said his reverence, "the Protestants, for the present, have the law of the land on their side, and power over you to compel the payment of tithes to themselves; but we have right, justice, and the law of God on ours; and if everything was in its proper place, it is not to the parsons, but to us, that you would pay them."

"Well, well, sir," replied Kelly, who now experienced a community of feeling upon the subject with his reverence that instantly threw him into a familiarity of manner which he thought the point between them justified—"who knows, sir?" said he, with a knowing smile, "there's a good time coming, yer rev'rence."

"Ay," said Father Philemy, "wait till we get once into

the Big House,[1] and if we don't turn the scales—if the Established Church doesn't go down, why, there's no truth in Scripture. Now, Kelly, all's right but the money—have you brought your dues?"

"Here it is, sir," said Kelly, handing him his dues for the last year. It is to be observed here that, according as the penitents went to be examined, or to kneel down to confess, a certain sum was exacted from each, which varied according to the arrears that might have been due to the priest. Indeed, it is not unusual for the host and hostess on these occasions to be refused a participation in the sacrament until they pay this money, notwithstanding the considerable expense they are put to in entertaining not only the clergy, but a certain number of their own friends and relations.

"Well, stand aside, I'll hear you first; and now come up here, you young gentleman, that laughed so heartily a while ago at my joke—ha, ha, ha!—come up here, child."

A lad now approached him whose face, on a first view, had something simple and thoughtless in it, but in which, on a closer inspection, might be traced a lurking, sarcastic humour, of which his reverence never dreamt.

"You're for confession, of course," said the priest.

"Of coorse," said the lad, echoing him, and laying a stress upon the word, which did not much elevate the meaning of the blind compliance in general with the rite in question.

"Oh!" exclaimed the priest, recognising him when he approached—"you are Dan Fegan's son, and designed for the Church yourself; you are a good Latinist, for I remember examining you in Erasmus about two years ago—*Quomodo se habet corpus tuum Charum lignum sacerdotis?*"

"*Valde, Domine,*" replied the lad, "*Quomodo se habet anima tua, charum exemplar sacer*dotage, *et fulcrum robustissimum Ecclesiæ sacrosanctæ.*"

"Very good, Harry," replied his reverence, laughing—"stand aside; I'll hear you after Kelly."

He then called up a man with a long, melancholy face, which he noticed before to have been proof against his joke, and,

[1] Parliament. Catholics were ineligible for Parliament before the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Bill, 1829.—Ed.

after making two or three additional fruitless experiments upon his gravity, he commenced a cross-fire of peevish interrogatories, which would have excluded him from the "tribunal" on that occasion, were it not that the man was remarkably well prepared, and answered the priest's questions very pertinently.

This over, he repaired to his room, where the work of absolution commenced; and, as there was a considerable number to be rendered sinless before the hour of dinner, he contrived to unsin them with an alacrity that was really surprising.

Immediately after the conversation already detailed between his reverence and Phaddhy, the latter sought Katty, that he might communicate to her the unlucky oversight which they had committed in neglecting to provide fresh meat and wine. "We'll be disgraced for ever," said Phaddhy—"without either a bit of mutton or a bottle of wine for the gintlemen, and that Parrah More Slevin had both."

"And I hope," replied Katty, "that you're not so mane as to let any of that faction outdo you in dacency—the nagerly set! It was enough for them to bate us in the law-shoot about the horse, and not to have the laugh agin at us about this."

"Well, that same law-shoot is not over with them yet," said Phaddhy; "wait till the spring fair comes, and if I don't have a faction gathered that'll sweep them out of the town, why, my name's not Phaddhy! But where is Mat, till we sind him off?"

"*Arrah,* Phaddhy," said Katty, "wasn't it friendly of Father Philemy to give us the hard word about the wine and mutton?"

"Very friendly," retorted Phaddy, who, after all, appeared to have suspected the priest—"very friendly indeed, when it's to put a good joint before himself, and a bottle of wine in his jacket. No, no, Katty! it's not altogether for the sake of Father Philemy, but I wouldn't have the neighbours say that I was near and undacent; and, above all things, I wouldn't be worse nor the Slevins, for the same set would keep it up agin us long enough."

Our readers will admire the tact with which Father Philemy worked upon the rival feeling between the factions; but, independently of this, there is a generous hospitality in an Irish peasant which would urge him to any stratagem, were it even the disposal of his only cow, sooner than incur the imputation of a narrow, or, as he himself terms it, "an undacent" or "nagerly" [1] spirit.

In the course of a short time Phaddhy despatched two messengers, one for the wine, and another for the mutton; and, that they might not have cause for any unnecessary delay, he gave them the two reverend gentlemen's horses, ordering them to spare neither whip nor spur until they returned. This was an agreeable command to the messengers, who, as soon as they found themselves mounted, made a bet of a "trate," to be paid on arriving in the town to which they were sent, to him who should first reach a little stream that crossed the road at the entrance of it, called the "pound burn." But I must not forget to state that they not only were mounted on the priests' horses, but took their great-coats, as the day had changed and threatened to rain. Accordingly, on getting out upon the main road, they set off, whip and spur, at full speed, jostling one another and cutting each other's horse as if they had been intoxicated; and the fact is that, owing to the liberal distribution of the bottle that morning, they were not far from it.

"Bliss us!" exclaimed the country people, as they passed, "what on airth can be the matther with Father Philemy and Father Con, that they're abusing wan another at sich a rate!"

"Oh!" exclaimed another, "it's apt to be a sick call, and they're thrying to be there before the body grows cowld." [2]

"Ay, or maybe," a third conjectured, "it's to ould Magennis, that's on the point of death, and going to lave all his money behind him, and they're striving to see who'll get there first."

But their astonishment was not a whit lessened when, in about an hour afterwards, they perceived them both return: the person who represented Father Con having an overgrown

[1] Niggardly.

[2] Until the body grows cold there is considered to be a possibility of life in it.

leg of mutton slung behind his back like an Irish harp, reckless of its friction against his reverence's coat, which it had completely saturated with grease; and the duplicate of Father Philemy with a sack over his shoulder, in the bottom of which was half a dozen of Mr. M'Loughlin's best port.

Phaddhy, in the meantime, being determined to mortify his rival, Parrah More, by a superior display of hospitality, waited upon that personage, and exacted a promise from him to come down and partake of the dinner—a promise which the other was not slack in fulfilling. Phaddhy's heart was now on the point of taking its rest, when it occurred to him that there yet remained one circumstance in which he might utterly eclipse his rival, and that was to ask Captain Wilson, his landlord, to meet their reverences at dinner. He accordingly went over to him, for he only lived a few miles distant, having first communicated the thing privately to Katty, and requested that, as their reverences that day held a station in his house, and would dine there, he would have the kindness to dine along with them. To this the captain, who was intimate with both the clergymen, gave a ready compliance, and Phaddhy returned home in high spirits.

In the meantime the two priests were busy in the work of absolution. The hour of three had arrived, and they had many to shrive; but in the course of a short time a reverend auxiliary made his appearance, accompanied by one of Father Philemy's nephews, who was then about to enter Maynooth. This clerical gentleman had been appointed to a parish, but, owing to some circumstances which were known only in the distant part of the diocese where he had resided, he was deprived of it, and had, at the period I am writing of, no appointment in the Church, though he was in full orders. If I mistake not, he incurred his bishop's displeasure by being too warm an advocate for domestic nomination,[1] a piece of discipline the re-establishment of which was then attempted by the junior clergymen of the diocese wherein the scene of this station is laid. Be this as it may, he came in time

[1] This refers to a question much discussed in Ireland at the time Carleton was writing these sketches—the right of nominating bishops without interference from England.—Ed.

to assist the gentlemen in absolving those penitents (as we must call them so) who still remained unconfessed.

During all this time Katty was in the plenitude of her authority, and her sense of importance manifested itself in a manner that was by no means softened by having been that morning at her duty. Her tones were not so shrill nor so loud as they would have been had not their reverences been within hearing; but what was wanting in loudness was displayed in a firm and decided energy, that vented itself frequently in the course of the day upon the backs and heads of her sons, daughters, and servants, as they crossed her path in the impatience and bustle of her employment. It was truly ludicrous to see her, on encountering one of them in these fretful moments, give him a drive head-foremost against the wall, exclaiming, as she shook her fist at him, "Ho, you may bless your stars that they're under the roof, or it wouldn't go so asy wid you; for if goodness hasn't said it, you'll make me lose my sowl this blessed and holy day. But this is still the case—the very time I go to my duty, the devil (between us and harm) is sure to throw fifty temptations acrass me, and, to help him, you must come in my way—but wait till to-morrow, and if I don't pay you for this, I'm not here."

About four o'clock the penitents were at length all despatched; and those who were to be detained for dinner, many of whom had not eaten anything until then, in consequence of the necessity of receiving the Eucharist fasting, were taken aside to taste some of Phaddhy's *poteen*. At length the hour of dinner arrived, and along with it the redoubtable Parrah More Slevin, Captain Wilson, and another nephew of Father Philemy's, who had come to know what detained his brother who had conducted the auxiliary priest to Phaddhy's. It is surprising on these occasions to think how many uncles, and nephews, and cousins, to the forty-second degree, find it needful to follow their reverences on messages of various kinds; and it is equally surprising to observe with what exactness they drop in during the hour of dinner. Of course, any blood-relation or friend of the priest's must be received with cordiality; and consequently they do not return without solid proofs of the good-natured hospitality

of poor Paddy, who feels no greater pleasure than in showing his "dacency" to any belonging to his reverence.

I daresay it would be difficult to find a more motley and diversified company than sat down to the ungarnished fare which Katty laid before them. There were first, Fathers Philemy, Con, and the auxiliary from the far part of the diocese; next followed Captain Wilson, Peter Malone, and Father Philemy's two nephews; after these came Phaddhy himself, Parrah More Slevin, with about two dozen more of the most remarkable and uncouth personages that could sit down to table. There were besides about a dozen of females, most of whom by this time, owing to Katty's private kindness, and a slight thirst occasioned by the long fast, were in a most independent and placid state of feeling. Father Philemy, *ex officio*, filled the chair. He was a small man, with cherub cheeks as red as roses, black twinkling eyes, and double chin; was of the fat-headed genus, and if phrenologists be correct, must have given indications of early piety, for he was bald before his time, and had the organ of veneration standing visible on his crown; his hair, from having once been black, had become an iron-grey, and hung down behind his ears, resting on the collar of his coat, according to the old school, to which, I must remark, he belonged, having been educated on the Continent. His coat had large double breasts, the lapels of which hung down loosely on each side, being the prototype of his waistcoat, whose double breasts fell downwards in the same manner; his black small-clothes had silver buckles at the knees, and the gaiters, which did not reach up so far, discovered a pair of white lamb's-wool stockings, somewhat retreating from their original colour.

Father Con was a tall, muscular, able-bodied young man, with an immensely broad pair of shoulders, of which he was vain; his black hair was cropped close, except a thin portion of it, which was trimmed quite evenly across his eyebrows; he was rather bow-limbed, and when walking looked upwards, holding out his elbows from his body, and letting the lower parts of his arms fall down, so that he went as if he carried a keg under each. His coat, though not well made, was of the best glossy broadcloth, and his long clerical boots went up about his knees like a dragoon's. There was an awkward stiff-

ness about him, in very good keeping with a dark, melancholy cast of countenance, in which, however, a man might discover an air of simplicity not to be found in the visage of his superior, Father Philemy.

The latter gentleman filled the chair, as I said, and carved the goose; on his right sat Captain Wilson; on his left, the auxiliary—next to them Father Con, the nephews, Peter Malone, *et cetera*. To enumerate the items of the dinner is unnecessary, as our readers have a pretty accurate notion of them from what we have already said. We can only observe that when Phaddhy saw it laid, and all the wheels of the system fairly set a-going, he looked at Parrah More with an air of triumph which he could not conceal.

The talk in the beginning was altogether confined to the clergymen and Mr. Wilson, including a few diffident contributions from Peter Malone and the two nephews.

"Mr. M'Guirk," observed Captain Wilson, after the conversation had taken several turns, "I'm sure that in the course of your professional duties, sir, you must have had occasion to make many observations upon human nature, from the circumstance of seeing it in every condition and state of feeling possible—from the baptism of the infant until the aged man receives the last rites of your Church and the sweet consolations of religion from your hand."

"Not a doubt of it, Phaddhy," said Father Philemy to Phaddhy, whom he had been addressing at the time—"not a doubt of it—and I'll do everything in my power to get him in[1] too, and I am told he is bright."

"Uncle," said one of the nephews, "this gentleman is speaking to you."

"And why not?" continued his reverence, who was so closely engaged with Phaddhy that he did not hear even the nephew's appeal—"a bishop—and why not? Has he not as good a chance of being a bishop as any of them? though, God knows, it is not always merit that gets a bishopric in any Church, or I myself might. But let that pass," said he, fixing his eyes on the bottle.

"Father Philemy," said Father Con, "Captain Wilson was addressing himself to you in the most especial manner."

[1] Into Maynooth College.

"O Captain! I beg ten thousand pardons. I was engaged talking with Phaddhy here about his son, who is a young shaving of our cloth, sir; he is intended for the Mission. Phaddhy, I will either examine him myself, or make Father Con examine him, by-and-by. Well, Captain?"

The Captain now repeated what he had said.

"Very true, Captain, and we do see it in as many shapes as ever—Con, what do you call him?—put on him."

"Proteus," subjoined Con, who was famous at the classics.

Father Philemy nodded for the assistance, and continued: "But as for human nature, Captain, give it to me at a good roasting christening; or, what is better again, at a jovial wedding between two of my own parishioners—say this pretty fair-haired daughter of Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy's here, and long Ned Slevin, Parrah More's son there. Eh, Phaddhy, will it be a match? What do you say, Parrah More? Upon my veracity, I must bring that about."

"Why then, yer reverence," replied Phaddhy, who was now a little softened, and forgot his enmity against Parrah More for the present, "unlikelier things might happen."

"It won't be my fault," said Parrah More, "if my son Ned has no objection."

"He object!" replied Father Philemy, "if I take it in hand, let me see who'll dare to object. Doesn't the scripture say it? and, sure, we can't go against the scripture."

"By-the-bye," said Captain Wilson, who was a dry humourist, "I am happy to be able to infer from what you say, Father Philemy, that you are not, as the clergymen of your Church are supposed to be, inimical to the Bible."

"Me an enemy to the Bible! No such thing, sir; but, Captain, begging your pardon, we'll have nothing more about the Bible. You see we are met here, as friends and good fellows, to enjoy ourselves after the severity of our spiritual duties, and we must relax a little. We can't always carry long faces like Methodist parsons. Come, Parrah More, let the Bible take a nap, and give us a song."

His reverence was now seconded in his motion by the most of all present, and Parrah More accordingly gave them a song. After a few songs more the conversation went on as before.

"Now, Parrah More," said Phaddhy, "you must try my

wine. I hope it's as good as what you gave his reverence yesterday."

The words, however, had scarcely passed his lips when Father Philemy burst out into a fit of laughter, clapping and rubbing his hands in a manner the most astonishing. "O Phaddhy, Phaddhy!" shouted his reverence, laughing heartily, "I done you for once—I done you, my man, 'cute as you thought yourself. Why, you nager, you, did you think to put us off with punch, and you have a stocking of hard guineas hid in a hole in the wall?"

"What does yer rev'rence mane?" said Phaddhy, "for myself can make no undherstanding out of it at all, at all."

To this his reverence only replied by another laugh.

"I gave his reverence no wine," said Parrah More, in reply to Phaddhy's question.

"What!" said Phaddhy, "none yesterday at the station held with you?"

"Not a bit of me ever thought of it."

"Nor no mutton?"

"Why, then, devil a morsel of mutton, Phaddhy; but we had a rib of beef."

Phaddhy now looked over to his reverence rather sheepishly, with the smile of a man on his face who felt himself foiled. "Well, yer reverence has done me, sure enough," he replied, rubbing his head. "I give it up to you, Father Philemy; but, anyhow, I'm glad I got it, and you're all welcome from the core of my heart. I'm only sorry I haven't as much more now to thrate you all like gintlemen; but there's some yet, and as much punch as will make all our heads come round."

Our readers must assist us with their own imaginations, and suppose the conversation to have passed very pleasantly, and the night, as well as the guests, to be somewhat far gone. The principal part of the conversation was borne by the three clergymen, Captain Wilson, and Phaddhy; that of the two nephews and Peter Malone ran in an undercurrent of its own; and in the preceding part of the night those who occupied the bottom of the table spoke to each other rather in whispers, being too much restrained by that rustic bashfulness which ties up the tongues of those who feel that their consequence

is overlooked among their superiors. According as the punch circulated, however, their diffidence began to wear off, and occasionally an odd laugh or so might be heard to break the monotony of their silence. The youngsters, too, though at first almost in a state of terror, soon commenced plucking each other, and a titter or a suppressed burst of laughter would break forth from one of the more waggish, who was put to a severe task in afterwards composing his countenance into sufficient gravity to escape detection, and a competent portion of chastisement the next day for not being able to "behave himself with betther manners."

During these juvenile breaches of decorum, Katty would raise her arm in a threatening attitude, shake her head at them, and look up at the clergy, intimating more by her earnestness of gesticulation than met the ear. Several songs again went round, of which, truth to tell, Father Philemy's were by far the best; for he possessed a rich comic expression of eye, which, added to suitable ludicrousness of gesture and a good voice, rendered him highly amusing to the company. Father Con declined singing, as being decidedly serious, though he was often solicited.

"He!" said Father Philemy—"he's no more voice than a woolpack; but Con's a cunning fellow. What do you think, Captain Wilson, but he pretends to be too pious to sing, and gets credit for piety—not because he is devout, but because he has a bad voice. Now, Con, you can't deny it, for there's not a man in the three kingdoms knows it better than myself—you sit there with a face upon you that might go before the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet, when you ought to be as jovial as another."

"Well, Father Philemy," said Phaddhy, "as he won't sing, maybe, wid submission, he'd examine Briney in his Latin, till his mother and I hear how he's doing at it."

"Ay, he's fond of dabbling at Latin, so he may try him—I'm sure I have no objection— So, Captain, as I was telling you——"

"Silence there below!" said Phaddhy to those at the lower end of the table, who were now talkative enough; "will yees whisht there till Father Con hears Briney a lesson in his Latin. Where are you, Briney? come here, *ma bouchal.*"

But Briney had absconded when he saw that the tug of war was about to commence. In a few minutes, however, the father returned, pushing the boy before him, who, in his reluctance to encounter the ordeal of examination, clung to every chair, table, and person in his way, hoping that his restiveness might induce them to postpone the examination till another occasion. The father, however, was inexorable, and by main force dragged him from all his holds and placed him beside Father Con.

"What's come over you, at all, at all, you insignified *shingawn*, you, to affront the gintleman in this way, and he kind enough to go for to give you an examination? Come now, you had betther not vex me, I tell you, but hould up your head and spake out loud, that we can all hear you. Now, Father Con, *achora*, you'll not be too hard upon him in the beginning, till he gets into it, for he's aisy dashed."

"Here, Briney," said Father Philemy, handing him his tumbler, "take a pull of this, and if you have any courage at all in you it will raise it; take a good pull."

Briney hesitated.

"Why but you take the glass out of his reverence's hand, sarrah," said the father—"what! is it without dhrinking his reverence's health first!"

Briney gave a most melancholy nod at his reverence as he put the tumbler to his mouth, which he nearly emptied, notwithstanding his shyness.

"For my part," said his reverence, looking at the almost empty tumbler, "I am pretty sure that that same chap will be able to take care of himself through life.—And so, Captain—" said he, resuming the conversation with Captain Wilson, for his notice of Briney was only parenthetical.

Father Con now took the book, which was Æsop's Fables, and, in accordance with Briney's intention, it opened exactly at the favourite fable of *Gallus Gallinaceus*. He was not aware, however, that Briney had kept that place open during the preceding part of the week, in order to effect this point. Father Philemy, however, was now beginning to relate another anecdote to the Captain, and the thread of his narrative twined rather ludicrously with that of the examination.

Briney, after a few hems, at length proceeded—"*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——"

"So, Captain, I was just after coming out of Widow Moylan's —it was in the Lammas fair—and a large one, by-the-bye, it was—so, sir, who should come up to me but Branagan. 'Well, Branagan,' said I, 'how does the world go now with you?'——"

"*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——"

"—— Says he. 'And how is that?' says I——"

"*Gallus Gallinaceus*——"

"—— Says he. 'Hut tut, Branagan,' says I—'you're drunk.' 'That's the thing, sir,' says Branagan, 'and I want to explain it all to your reverence.' 'Well,' said I, 'go on'——"

"*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——"

"—— Says he.—Let your *Gallus Gallinaceus* go to roost for this night, Con," said Father Philemy, who did not relish the interruption of his story. "I say, Phaddhy, send the boy to bed, and bring him down in your hand to my house on Saturday morning, and we will both examine him; but this is no time for it, and me engaged in conversation with Captain Wilson.—So, Captain—'Well, sir,' says Branagan, and he staggering, 'I took an oath against liquor, and I want your reverence to break it,' says he. 'What do you mean?' I inquired. 'Why, please your reverence,' said he, 'I took an oath against liquor, as I told you, not to drink more nor a pint of whisky in one day, and I want your reverence to break it for me, and make it only half a pint; for I find that a pint is too much for me; by the same token, that when I get that far, your reverence, I disremember the oath entirely.'"

The influence of the bottle now began to be felt, and the conversation absolutely blew a gale, wherein hearty laughter, good strong singing, loud argument, and general good-humour blended into one uproarious peal of hilarity, accompanied by some smart flashes of wit and humour which would not disgrace a prouder banquet. Phaddhy, in particular, melted into a spirit of the most unbounded benevolence—a spirit that would (if by any possible means he could effect it) embrace the whole human race; that is to say, he would

raise them—man, woman, and child—to the same elevated state of happiness which he enjoyed himself. That, indeed, was happiness in perfection, as pure and unadulterated as the poteen which created it. How could he be otherwise than happy?—he had succeeded to a good property and a stocking of hard guineas, without the hard labour of acquiring them; he had the "clargy" under his roof at last, partaking of a hospitality which he felt himself well able to afford them; he had settled with his reverence for five years' arrears of sin, all of which had been wiped out of his conscience by the blessed absolving hand of the priest; he was training up Briney for the Mission; and, though last not least, he was—far gone in his seventh tumbler!

"Come, jinteels," said he, "spare nothing here—there's lashings of everything; thrate yourselves dacent, and don't be saying to-morrow or next day that ever my father's son was nagerly. Death alive, Father Con, what are you doin'? Why, then, bad manners to me if that'll sarve, anyhow."

"Phaddhy," replied Father Con, "I assure you I have done my duty."

"Very well, Father Con, granting all that, it's no sin to repate a good turn, you know. Not a word I'll hear, yer reverence—one tumbler along with myself, if it was only for ould times." He then filled Father Con's tumbler, with his own hand, in a truly liberal spirit. "*Arrah,* Father Con, do you remember the day we had the leapin'-match, and the bout at the shoulder-stone?"

"Indeed, I'll not forget it, Phaddhy."

"And it's yourself that may say that; but I bleeve I rubbed the consate off of your reverence—only, that's betune ourselves, you persave."

"You did win the palm, Phaddhy, I'll not deny it; but you are the only man that ever bet[1] me at either of the athletics."

"And I'll say this for yer reverence, that you are one of the best and most able-bodied gintlemen I ever engaged with. Ah! Father Con, I'm past all that now—but no matter, here's yer reverence's health, and a shake hands—Father Philemy, yer health, docthor—yer strange reverence's health—Captain Wilson, not forgetting you, sir—Mr. Pether,

[1] Beat.

yours; and I hope to see you soon with the robes upon you, and to be able to prache us a good sarmon. Parrah More, *wus dha lauv*[1]—give me yer hand—you steeple, you; and I haven't the smallest taste of objection to what Father Philemy hinted at—ye'll obsarve. Katty, you thief o' the world, where are you? Your health, *avourneen*—come here, and give us your fist, Katty—bad manners to me if I could forget you afther all — the best crathur, your reverence, undher the sun, except when yer reverence puts yer *comedher* on her at confession, and then she's a little sharp or so, not a doubt of it; but no matther, Katty, *ahagur*, you do it all for the best. And Father Philemy, maybe it's myself didn't put the thrick upon you in the *Maragah More*, about Katty's death—ha, ha, ha! Jack M'Cramer, yer health—all yer healths, and ye're welcome here, if you war seven times as many. Briney, where are you, *ma bouchal?* Come up and shake hands wid yer father, as well as another—come up, *acushla*, and kiss me. Ah, Briney, my poor fellow, ye'll never be the cut of a man yer father was; but no matther, *avourneen*, ye'll be a betther man, I hope; and God knows you may asy be that, for, Father Philemy, I'm not what I ought to be, yer reverence; however, I may mend, and will, maybe, before a month of Sundays goes over me. But, for all that, Briney, I hope to see the day when you'll be sitting, an ordained priest, at my own table; if I once saw that, I could die contented—so mind yer larning, *acushla*, and his reverence here will back you, and make intherest to get you into the college. *Musha*, God pity them crathurs[2] at the door—aren't they gone yet? Listen to them coughin', for fraid we'd forget them; and throth and they won't be forgot this bout, anyhow. Katty, *avourneen*, give them, every one, big and little, young and ould, their skinful—don't lave a wrinkle in them; and see, take one of them bottles—the crathurs, they're starved sitting there all night in the cowld—and give them a couple of glasses apiece—it's good, yer reverence, to have the poor body's blessing at all times—and now, as I was saying, Here's all yer healths! and from the very veins of my heart yer welcome here."

[1] The translation follows it.

[2] The beggars.

Our readers may perceive that Phaddhy

> "Was not only blest, but glorious,
> O'er a' the ills o' life victorious;"

for, like the generality of our peasantry, the native drew to the surface of his character those warm, hospitable, and benevolent virtues which a purer system of morals and education would most certainly keep in full action, without running the risk, as in the present instance, of mixing bad habits with frank, manly, and generous qualities.

. . . . . .

"I'll not go, Con—I tell you I'll not go till I sing another song. Phaddhy, you're a prince—but where's the use of lighting more candles now, man, than you had in the beginning of the night? Is Captain Wilson gone? Then peace be with him; it's a pity he wasn't on the right side, for he's not the worst of them. Phaddhy, where are you?"

"Why, yer reverence," replied Katty, "he's got a little unwell, and jist laid down his head a bit."

"Katty," said Father Con, "you had better get a couple of the men to accompany Father Philemy home; for, though the night's clear, he doesn't see his way very well in the dark—poor man, his eyesight's failing him fast."

"Then the more's the pity, Father Con. Here, Denis, let yourself and Mat go home wid Father Philemy."

"Good-night, Katty," said Father Con—"good-night; and may our blessing sanctify you all!"

"Good-night, Father Con, *ahagur*," replied Katty; "and for goodness' sake see that they take care of Father Philemy, for it's himself that's the blessed and holy crathur, and the pleasant gintleman, out and out."

"Good-night, Katty," again repeated Father Con, as the cavalcade proceeded in a body—"good-night." And so ended the station.

AN ESSAY ON IRISH SWEARING

NO pen can do justice to the extravagance and frolic inseparable from the character of the Irish people; nor has any system of philosophy been discovered that can with moral fitness be applied to them. Phrenology fails to explain it, for, according to the most capital surveys hitherto made and reported on, it appears that, inasmuch as the moral and intellectual organs of Irishmen predominate over the physical and sensual, the people ought therefore to be ranked at the very tip-top of morality. We would warn the phrenologists, however, not to be too sanguine in drawing inferences from an examination of Paddy's head. Heaven only knows the scenes in which it is engaged, and the protuberances created by a long life of hard fighting. Many an organ and development is brought out on it by the cudgel, that never would have appeared had Nature been left to herself.

Drinking, fighting, and swearing are the three great characteristics of every people. Paddy's love of fighting and of whisky has been long proverbial; and of his tact in swearing much has also been said. But there is one department of oath-making in which he stands unrivalled and unapproachable: I mean the *alibi*. There is where he shines, where his oath, instead of being a mere matter of fact or opinion, rises up into the dignity of epic narrative, containing within itself all the complexity of machinery, harmony of parts, and fertility of invention by which your true epic should be characterised.

The Englishman, whom we will call the historian in swearing, will depose to the truth of this or that fact, but there the line is drawn: he swears his oath so far as he knows, and stands still. "I'm sure, for my part, I don't know; I've said all I knows about it," and beyond this his besotted intellect goeth not.

The Scotchman, on the other hand, who is the meta-

physician in swearing, sometimes borders on equivocation. He decidedly goes further than the Englishman, not because he has less honesty, but more prudence. He will assent to, or deny, a proposition; for the Englishman's "I don't know," and the Scotchman's "I dinna ken," are two very distinct assertions when properly understood. The former stands out a monument of dulness, an insuperable barrier against inquiry, ingenuity, and fancy; but the latter frequently stretches itself so as to embrace hypothetically a particular opinion.

But Paddy!—put him forward to prove an *alibi* for his fourteenth or fifteenth cousin, and you will be gratified by the pomp, pride, and circumstance of true swearing. Every oath with him is an epic—pure poetry, abounding with humour, pathos, and the highest order of invention and talent. He is not at ease, it is true, under facts; there is something too commonplace in dealing with them, which his genius scorns. But his flights—his flights are beautiful; and his episodes admirable and happy. In fact, he is an *improvisatore* at oath-taking, with this difference, that his *extempore* oaths possess all the ease and correctness of labour and design.

He is not, however, altogether averse to facts; but, like your true poet, he veils, changes, and modifies them with such skill that they possess all the merit and graces of fiction. If he happen to make an assertion incompatible with the plan of the piece, his genius acquires fresh energy, enables him to widen the design, and to create new machinery, with such happiness of adaptation that what appeared out of proportion or character is made in his hands to contribute to the general strength and beauty of the oath.

'Tis true there is nothing perfect under the sun; but if there were, it would certainly be Paddy at an *alibi*. Some flaws no doubt occur, some slight inaccuracies may be noticed by a critical eye, an occasional anachronism stands out, and a mistake or so in geography; but let it be recollected that Paddy's *alibi* is but a human production, let us not judge him by harsher rules than those which we apply to Homer, Virgil, or Shakespeare.

Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus is allowed on all hands. Virgil made Dido and Æneas contemporary, though they were not so; and Shakespeare, by the creative power of his genius,

changed an inland town into a sea-port. Come, come, have bowels. Let epic swearing be treated with the same courtesy shown to epic poetry, that is if both are the production of a rare genius. I maintain that when Paddy commits a blemish he is too harshly admonished for it. When he soars out of sight here, as occasionally happens, does he not frequently alight somewhere about Sydney Bay, much against his own inclination? And if he puts forth a hasty production, is he not compelled for the space of seven or fourteen years to revise his oath? But, indeed, few works of fiction are properly encouraged in Ireland.

It would be unpardonable in us, however, to overlook the beneficial effects of Paddy's peculiar genius in swearing *alibis*. Some persons, who display their own egregious ignorance of morality, may be disposed to think that it tends to lessen the obligation of an oath by inducing a habit among the people of swearing to what is not true. We look upon such persons as very dangerous to Ireland and to the repeal of the Union, and we request them not to push their principles too far in the disturbed parts of the country. Could society hold together a single day if nothing but truth were spoken? Would not law and lawyers soon become obsolete if nothing but truth were sworn? What would become of Parliament if truth alone were uttered there? Its annual proceedings might be despatched in a month. Fiction is the basis of society, the bond of commercial prosperity, the channel of communication between nation and nation, and not unfrequently the interpreter between a man and his own conscience.

For these and many other reasons which we could adduce, we say with Paddy, "Long life to fiction!" When associated with swearing it shines in its brightest colours. What, for instance, is calculated to produce the best and purest of the moral virtues so beautifully as the swearing an *alibi?* Here are fortitude and a love of freedom resisting oppression; for it is well known that all law is oppression in Ireland.

There is compassion for the peculiar state of the poor boy who perhaps only burnt a family in their beds; benevolence to prompt the generous effort in his behalf; disinterestedness to run the risk of becoming an involuntary absentee; fortitude in encountering a host of brazen-faced lawyers; patience under

the unsparing gripe of a cross-examiner; perseverance in conducting the oath to its close against a host of difficulties; and friendship, which bottoms and crowns them all.

Paddy's merits, however, touching the *alibi*, rest not here. Fiction on these occasions only teaches him how to perform a duty. It may be that he is under the obligation of a previous oath not to give evidence against certain of his friends and associates. Now, could anything in the whole circle of religion or ethics be conceived that renders the epic style of swearing so incumbent upon Paddy? There is a kind of moral fitness in all things; for where the necessity of invention exists, it is consolatory to reflect that the ability to invent is bestowed along with it.

Next to the *alibi* come Paddy's powers in sustaining a cross-examination. Many persons think that this is his *forte;* but we cannot yield to such an opinion, nor compromise his originality of conception in the scope and plan of an *alibi*. It is marked by a minuteness of touch and a peculiarity of expression which give it every appearance of real life. The circumstances are so well imagined, the groups so naturally disposed, the colouring so finished, and the background in such fine perspective, that the whole picture presents you with such keeping and *vraisemblance* as could be accomplished only by the genius of a master.

In point of interest, however, we must admit that his ability in a cross-examination ranks next to his skill in planning an *alibi*. There is in the former a versatility of talent that keeps him always ready; a happiness of retort, generally disastrous to the wit of the most established cross-examiner; an apparent simplicity which is quite as impenetrable as the lawyer's assurance; a *vis comica* which puts the court in tears; and an originality of sorrow that often convulses it with laughter. His resources, when he is pressed, are inexhaustible; and the address with which he contrives to gain time, that he may suit his reply to the object of his evidence, is beyond all praise. And yet his appearance when he mounts the table is anything but prepossessing; a sheepish look, and a loose-jointed frame of body, wrapped in a frieze greatcoat, do not promise much. Nay, there is often a rueful, blank expression in his visage which might lead a stranger to anticipate nothing but

blunders and dulness. This, however, is hypocrisy of the first water. Just observe the tact with which he places his *caubeen* upon the table, his *kippeen* across it, and the experienced air with which he pulls up the waistband of his breeches, absolutely girding his loins for battle. 'Tis true his blue eye has at present nothing remarkable in it except a drop or two of the native; but that is not remarkable.

When the direct examination has been concluded, nothing can be finer than the simplicity with which he turns round to the lawyer who is to cross-examine him. Yet, as if conscious that firmness and caution are his main guards, he again pulls up his waistband with a more vigorous hitch, looks shyly into the very eyes of his opponent, and awaits the first blow.

The question at length comes; and Paddy, after having raised the collar of his big coat on his shoulder, and twisted up the shoulder along with it, directly puts the query back to the lawyer, without altering a syllable of it, for the purpose of ascertaining more accurately whether that is the precise question that has been put to him; for Paddy is conscientious. Then is the science displayed on both sides. The one a veteran, trained in all the technicalities of legal puzzles, irony, blarney, sarcasm, impudence, stock jokes, quirks, rigmarolery, brow-beating, ridicule, and subtlety; the other a poor peasant, relying only upon the justice of a good cause and the gifts of nature, without either experience or learning, and with nothing but his native modesty to meet the forensic effrontery of his antagonist.

Our readers will perceive that the odds are a thousand to one against Paddy; yet, when he replies to a hackneyed genius at cross-examination, how does it happen that he uniformly elicits those roars of laughter which rise in the court, and convulse it from the judge to the crier? In this laugh, which is usually at the expense of the cross-examiner, Paddy himself always joins, so that the counsel has the double satisfaction of being made not only the jest of the judge and his brother lawyers, but of the ragged witness whom he attempted to make ridiculous.

It is not impossible that this merry mode of dispensing justice may somewhat encourage Paddy in that independence

of mind which relishes not the idea of being altogether bound by oaths that are too often administered with a jocular spirit. To many of the uninitiated Irish an oath is a solemn, to some an awful thing. Of this wholesome reverence for its sanction, two or three testimonies given in a court of justice usually cure them. The indifferent, business-like manner in which the oaths are put, the sing-song tone of voice, the rapid utterance of the words, give to this solemn act an appearance of excellent burlesque, which ultimately renders the whole proceedings remarkable for the absence of truth and reality; but, at the same time, gives them unquestionable merit as a dramatic representation, abounding with fiction, well related, and ably acted.

Thumb-kissing is another feature in Paddy's adroitness too important to be passed over in silence. Here his tact shines out again. It would be impossible for him in many cases to meet the perplexities of a cross-examination so cleverly as he does, if he did not believe that he had, by kissing his thumb instead of the book, actually taken no oath, and consequently given to himself a wider range of action. We must admit, however, that this very circumstance involves him in difficulties which are sometimes peculiarly embarrassing. Taking everything into consideration, the prospect of freedom for his sixth cousin, the consciousness of having kissed his thumb, or the consoling reflection that he swore only on a "Law" Bible, it must be granted that the opportunities presented by a cross-examination are well calculated to display his wit, humour, and fertility of invention. He is accordingly great in it; but still we maintain that his execution of an *alibi* is his ablest performance, comprising, as it does, both the conception and construction of the work.

Both the oaths and imprecations of the Irish display, like those who use them, indications of great cruelty and great humour. Many of the former exhibit that ingenuity which comes out when Paddy is on his cross-examination in a court of justice. Every people, it is true, have resorted to the habit of mutilating or changing in their oaths the letters which form the Creator's name; but we question if any have surpassed the Irish in the cleverness with which they accomplish it. Mock oaths are habitual to Irishmen in ordinary con-

versation; but the use of any or all of them is not considered to constitute an oath; on the contrary, they are in the mouths of many who would not, except upon a very solemn occasion indeed, swear by the name of the Deity in its proper form.

The ingenuity of their mock oaths is sufficient to occasion much perplexity to any one disposed to consider it in connection with the character and moral feelings of the people. Whether to note it as a reluctance on their part to incur the guilt of an oath, or as a proof of habitual tact in evading it by artifice, is manifestly a difficulty hard to be overcome. We are decidedly inclined to the former; for although there is much laxity of principle among Irishmen, naturally to be expected from men whose moral state has been neglected by the legislature, and deteriorated by political and religious asperity, acting upon quick passions and badly-regulated minds—yet we know that they possess, after all, a strong but vague, undirected sense of devotional feeling and reverence, which are associated with great crimes and dark shades of character. This explains one chief cause of the sympathy which is felt in Ireland for criminals from whom the law exacts the fatal penalty of death; and it also accounts, independently of the existence of any illegal association, for the terrible retribution inflicted upon those who come forward to prosecute them. It is not in Ireland with criminals as in other countries, where the character of a murderer or incendiary is notoriously bad, as resulting from a life of gradual profligacy and villainy. Far from it. In Ireland you will find those crimes perpetrated by men who are good fathers, good husbands, good sons, and good neighbours—by men who would share their last morsel or their last shilling with a fellow-creature in distress—who would generously lose their lives for a man who had obliged them, provided he had not incurred their enmity—and who would protect a defenceless stranger as far as lay in their power.

There are some mock oaths among Irishmen which must have had their origin amongst those whose habits of thought were much more elevated than could be supposed to characterise the lower orders. "By the powers of death" is never now used as we have written it; but the ludicrous

travesty of it, "By the powdhers o' delf," is quite common. Of this and other mock oaths it may be right to observe that those who swear by them are in general ignorant of their proper origin. There are some, however, of this description whose original form is well known. One of these Paddy displays considerable ingenuity in using. "By the cross" can scarcely be classed under the mock oaths; but the manner in which it is pressed into asseverations is amusing. When Paddy is affirming a truth he swears "by the crass" simply, and this with him is an oath of considerable obligation. He generally, in order to render it more impressive, accompanies it with suitable action, that is, he places the forefinger of each hand across, that he may assail you through two senses instead of one. On the contrary, when he intends to hoax you by asserting what is not true, he ingeniously multiplies the oath, and swears "by the five crasses," that is, by his own five fingers, placing at the same time his four fingers and his thumbs across each other in a most impressive and vehement manner. Don't believe him then—the knave is lying as fast as possible, and with no remorse. "By the crass o' Christ" is an oath of much solemnity, and seldom used in a falsehood. Paddy also often places two bits of straw across, and sometimes two sticks, upon which he swears with an appearance of great heat and sincerity—*sed caveto.*

Irishmen generally consider iron as a sacred metal. In the interior of the country the thieves (but few in number) are frequently averse to stealing it. Why it possesses this hold upon their affections it is difficult to say, but it is certain that they rank it among their sacred things; consider that to find it is lucky, and nail it over their doors when found in the convenient shape of a horseshoe. It is also used as a medium of asserting truth. We believe, however, that the sanction it imposes is not very strong. "By this blessed iron!" "By this blessed an' holy iron!" are oaths of an inferior grade; but if the circumstance on which they are founded be a matter of indifference, they seldom depart from truth in using them.

Paddy, when engaged in a fight, is never at a loss for a weapon, and we may also affirm that he is never at a loss for an oath. When relating a narrative, or some other circum-

stance of his own invention, if contradicted, he will corroborate it, in order to sustain his credit or produce the proper impression, by an abrupt oath upon the first object he can seize. "*Arrah,* nonsense! by this pipe in my hand, it's as thrue as"—and then, before he completes the illustration, he goes on with a fine specimen of equivocation—"By the stool I'm sittin' an, it is; an' what more would you have from me, barrin' I take my book oath of it?" Thus does he, under the mask of an insinuation, induce you to believe that he has actually sworn it, whereas the oath is always left undefined and incomplete.

Sometimes he is exceedingly comprehensive in his adjurations, and swears upon a magnificent scale; as, for instance, "By the contints of all the books that ever wor opened an' shut, it's as thrue as the sun to the dial." This certainly leaves "the five crasses" immeasurably behind. However, be cautious, and not too confident in taking so sweeping and learned an oath upon trust, notwithstanding its imposing effect. We grant, indeed, that an oath which comprehends within its scope all the learned libraries of Europe, including even the Alexandrian of old, is not only an erudite one, but establishes in a high degree the taste of the swearer, and displays on his part an uncommon grasp of intellect. Still we recommend you, whenever you hear an alleged fact substantiated by it, to set your ear as sharply as possible; for, after all, it is more than probable that every book by which he has sworn might be contained in a nutshell. The secret may be briefly explained. Paddy is in the habit of substituting the word never for ever. "By all the books that never were opened or shut," the reader perceives, is only a flourish of trumpets—a mere delusion of the enemy.

In fact, Paddy has oaths rising gradually from the lying ludicrous to the superstitious solemn, each of which finely illustrates the nature of the subject to which it is applied. When he swears "by the contints o' Moll Kelly's Primer," or "by the piper that played afore Moses," you are perhaps as strongly inclined to believe him as when he draws upon a more serious oath—that is, you almost regret the thing is not the gospel that Paddy asserts it to be. In the former sense, the humorous narrative which calls forth the laughable

burlseque of "by the piper o' Moses," is usually the richest lie in the whole range of fiction.

Paddy is, in his ejaculatory as well as in all his other mock oaths, a kind of smuggler in morality, imposing as often as he can upon his own conscience, and upon those who exercise spiritual authority over him. Perhaps more of his oaths are blood-stained than would be found among the inhabitants of all Christendom put together.

Paddy's oaths in his amours are generally rich specimens of humorous knavery and cunning. It occasionally happens—but for the honour of our virtuous countrywomen, we say but rarely—that by the honey of his flattering and delusive tongue he succeeds in placing some unsuspecting girl's reputation in rather a hazardous predicament. When the priest comes to investigate the affair, and to cause him to make compensation to the innocent creature who suffered by his blandishments, it is almost uniformly ascertained that, in order to satisfy her scruples as to the honesty of his promises, he had sworn marriage to her on a book of ballads!!! In other cases blank books have been used for the same purpose.

If, however, you wish to pin Paddy up in a corner, get him a relic, a Catholic prayer-book, or a Douay Bible to swear upon. Here is where the fox—notwithstanding all his turnings and windings upon heretic Bibles, books of ballads, or mock oaths—is caught at last. The strongest principle in him is superstition. It may be found as the prime mover in his best and worst actions. An atrocious man who is superstitious, will perform many good and charitable actions, with a hope that their merit in the sight of God may cancel the guilt of his crimes. On the other hand, a good man who is superstitiously the slave of his religious opinions, will lend himself to those illegal combinations whose object is, by keeping ready a system of organised opposition to an heretical government, to fulfil, if a political crisis should render it practicable, the absurd prophecies of Pastorini[1] and Columbkill.[2]

[1] Pastorini was an Italian writer whose history of the Christian Church "past and future," as indicated in prophecy, was translated about 1810, and became immensely popular in Ireland.—ED.

[2] Some forgeries concocted, we are told, by order of the English Government, as one of the means of subduing the people. For a couple of centuries the people implicitly believed in them.—ED.

Although the prophecies of the former would appear to be out of date to a rational reader, yet Paddy, who can see farther into prophecy than any rational reader, honestly believes that Pastorini has left, for those who are superstitiously given, sufficient range of expectation in several parts of his work.

We might enumerate many other oaths in frequent use among the peasantry; but, as our object is not to detail them at full length, we trust that those already specified may be considered sufficient to enable our readers to get a fuller insight into their character and their moral influence upon the people.

The next thing which occurs to us in connection with the present subject is cursing; and here again Paddy holds the first place. His imprecations are often full, bitter, and intense. Indeed, there is more poetry and epigrammatic point in them than in those of any other country in the world.

We find it a difficult thing to enumerate the Irish curses so as to do justice to a subject so varied and so liable to be shifted and improved by the fertile genius of those who send them abroad. Indeed, to reduce them into order and method would be a task of considerable difficulty. Every occasion and every fit of passion frequently produce a new curse, perhaps equal in bitterness to any that has gone before it.

Many of the Irish imprecations are difficult to be understood, having their origin in some historical event, or in poetical metaphors that require a considerable process of reasoning to explain them. Of this twofold class is that general one—"The curse of Cromwell on you!" which means, "May you suffer all that a tyrant like Cromwell would inflict!" and "The curse o' the crows upon you!" which is probably an allusion to the Danish invasion, a raven being the symbol of Denmark; or it may be tantamount to "May you rot on the hills, that the crows may feed upon your carcass!" Perhaps it may thus be understood to imprecate death upon you or some member of your house—alluding to the superstition of rooks hovering over the habitations of the sick, when the malady with which they are afflicted is known to be fatal. Indeed, the latter must certainly be the meaning of it, as is evident from the proverb of "Die, an' give the crow a puddin'."

"Hell's cure to you!" "The divil's luck to you!" "High hanging to you!" "Hard feeding to you!" "A short coorse to you!" are all pretty intense, and generally used under provocation and passion. In these cases the curses just mentioned are directed immediately to the offensive object, and there certainly is no want of the *malus animus* to give them energy. It would be easy to multiply the imprecations belonging to this class among the peasantry, but the task is rather unpleasant. There are a few, however, which in consequence of their ingenuity we cannot pass over; they are, in sooth, studies for the swearer. "May you never die till you see your own funeral!" is a very beautiful specimen of the periphrasis: it simply means, may you be hanged; for he who is hanged is humorously said to be favoured with a view of that sombre spectacle, by which they mean the crowd that attends an execution. To the same purpose is "May you die wid a caper in your heel!" "May you die in your pumps!" "May your last dance be a hornpipe on the air!" These are all emblematic of hanging, and are uttered sometimes in jest, and occasionally in earnest. "May the grass grow before your door!" is highly imaginative and poetical. Nothing, indeed, can present the mind with a stronger or more picturesque emblem of desolation and ruin. Its malignity is terrible.

There are also mock imprecations as well as mock oaths. Of this character are "The divil go with you and sixpence, an' thin you'll want neither money nor company!" This humorous and considerate curse is generally confined to the female sex. When Paddy happens to be in a romping mood, and teases his sweetheart too much, she usually utters it with a countenance combating with smiles and frowns, whilst she stands in the act of pinning up her dishevelled hair, her cheeks, particularly the one next Paddy, deepened into a becoming blush.

"Bad scran to you!" is another form seldom used in anger; it is the same as "Hard feeding to you!" "Bad win' to you!" is "Ill health to you!" it is nearly the same as "Consumin' (consumption) to you!" Two other imprecations come under this head, which we will class together because they are counterparts of each other, with this difference, that one of

them is the most subtilely and intensely withering in its purport that can well be conceived. The one is that common curse, "Bad 'cess to you!" that is, bad success to you; we may identify it with "Hard fortune to you!" The other is a keen one indeed—"Sweet bad luck to you!" Now, whether we consider the epithet sweet as bitterly ironical, or deem it as a wish that prosperity may harden the heart to the accomplishment of future damnation, as in the case of Dives, we must in either sense grant that it is an oath of powerful hatred and venom. Occasionally the curse of "Bad luck to you!" produces an admirable retort, which is pretty common. When one man applies it to another, he is answered with "Good luck to you, thin; but may neither of them ever happen!"

"Six eggs to you, an' half a dozen o' them rotten!" like "The divil go with you an' sixpence!" is another of those pleasantries which mostly occur in the good-humoured *badinage* between the sexes. It implies disappointment.

There is a species of imprecation prevalent among Irishmen which we may term neutral. It is ended by the word bit, and merely results from a habit of swearing where there is no malignity of purpose. An Irishman, when corroborating an assertion, however true or false, will often say, "Bad luck to the bit but it is!" "Divil fire the bit but it's thruth!" "Damn the bit but it is!" and so on. In this form the mind is not moved, nor the passions excited; it is therefore probably the most insipid of all their imprecations.

Some of the most dreadful maledictions are to be heard among the confirmed mendicants of Ireland. The wit, the gall, and the poetry of these are uncommon. "May you melt off the earth like snow off the ditch!" is one of a high order and intense malignity; but it is not exclusively confined to mendicants, although they form that class among which it is most prevalent. Nearly related to this is "May you melt like butther before a summer sun!" These are, indeed, essentially poetical: they present the mind with appropriate imagery, and exhibit a comparison perfectly just and striking, The former we think unrivalled.

Some of the Irish imprecations would appear to have come down to us from the Ordeals. Of this class, probably, are

the following: "May this be poison to me!" "May I be roasted on red-hot iron!" Others of them, from their boldness of metaphor, seem to be of Oriental descent. One expression, indeed, is strikingly so. When a deep offence is offered to an Irishman, under such peculiar circumstances that he cannot immediately retaliate, he usually replies to his enemy, "You'll sup sorrow for this!" "You'll curse the day it happened!" "I'll make you rub your heels together!" All these figurative denunciations are used for the purpose of intimating the pain and agony he will compel his enemy to suffer.

We cannot omit a form of imprecation for good, which is also habitual among the peasantry of Ireland. It is certainly harmless, and argues benevolence of heart. We mean such expressions as the following: "Salvation to me!" "May I never do harm!" "May I never do an ill turn!" "May I never sin!" These are generally used by men who are blameless and peaceable in their lives—simple and well disposed in their intercourse with the world.

Next in order are the curses of pilgrims, mendicants, and idiots. Of those also Paddy entertains a wholesome dread—a circumstance which the pilgrim and mendicant turn with great judgment to their own account. Many a legend and anecdote do such chroniclers relate when the family with whom they rest for the night are all seated around the winter hearth. These are often illustrative of the baneful effects of the poor man's curse. Of course, they produce a proper impression; and accordingly Paddy avoids offending such persons in any way that might bring him under their displeasure.

A certain class of curses much dreaded in Ireland are those of the widow and the orphan. There is, however, something touching and beautiful in this fear of injuring the sorrowful and unprotected. It is, we are happy to say, a becoming and prominent feature in Paddy's character; for, to do him justice in his virtues as well as in his vices, we repeat that he cannot be surpassed in his humanity to the lonely widow and her helpless orphans. He will collect a number of his friends, and proceed with them in a body

to plant her bit of potato ground, to reap her oats, to draw home her turf, or secure her hay. Nay, he will beguile her of her sorrows with a natural sympathy and delicacy that do him honour; his heart is open to her complaints, and his hand ever extended to assist her.

There is a strange opinion to be found in Ireland upon the subject of curses. The peasantry think that a curse, no matter how uttered, will fall on something, but that it depends upon the person against whom it is directed whether or not it will descend on him. A curse, we have heard them say, will rest for seven years in the air, ready to alight upon the head of the person who provoked the malediction. It hovers over him, like a kite over its prey, watching the moment when he may be abandoned by his guardian angel; if this occurs, it shoots with the rapidity of a meteor on his head, and clings to him in the shape of illness, temptation, or some other calamity.

They think, however, that the blessing of one person may cancel the curse of another; but this opinion does not affect the theory we have just mentioned. When a man experiences an unpleasant accident they will say, "He has had some poor body's curse;" and, on the contrary, when he narrowly escapes it they say, "He has had some poor body's blessing."

There is no country in which the phrases of goodwill and affection are so strong as in Ireland. The Irish language actually flows with the milk and honey of love and friendship. Sweet and palatable is it to the other sex, and sweetly can Paddy, with his deluding ways, administer it to them from the top of his mellifluous tongue, as a dove feeds her young, or as a kind mother her babe, shaping with her own pretty mouth every morsel of the delicate viands before it goes into that of the infant. In this manner does Paddy, seated behind a ditch, of a bright Sunday, when he ought to be at mass, feed up some innocent girl, not with "false music," but with sweet words, for nothing more musical or melting than his brogue ever dissolved a female heart. Indeed, it is of the danger to be apprehended from the melody of his voice that the admirable and appropriate proverb speaks; for, when he addresses his sweetheart under circumstances

that justify suspicion, it is generally said, "Paddy's feedin' her up wid false music."

What language has a phrase equal in beauty and tenderness to *cushla machree*—the pulse of my heart? Can it be paralleled in the whole range of all that are, ever were, or ever will be spoken, for music, sweetness, and a knowledge of anatomy? If Paddy is unrivalled at swearing, he fairly throws the world behind him at the blarney. In professing friendship and making love, give him but a taste of the native, and he is a walking honeycomb, that every woman who sees him wishes to have a lick at; and heaven knows that frequently, at all times, and in all places, does he get himself licked on their account.

Another expression of peculiar force is *vick machree*—or, son of my heart. This is not only elegant, but affectionate beyond almost any other phrase except the foregoing. It is, in a sense, somewhat different from that in which the philosophical poet has used it, a beautiful comment upon the sentiment of "the child's the father of the man," uttered by Wordsworth.

We have seen many a youth, on more occasions than one, standing in profound affliction over the dead body of his aged father, exclaiming, "*Ahir, vick machree—vick machree—wuil thu marra wo'um? Wuil thu marra wo'um?*" "Father, son of my heart, son of my heart, art thou dead from me—art thou dead from me?"—an expression, we think, under any circumstances, not to be surpassed in the intensity of domestic affliction which it expresses; but, under those alluded to, we consider it altogether elevated in exquisite and poetic beauty above the most powerful symbols of Oriental imagery.

A third phrase peculiar to love and affection is *Manim asthee hu*—or, "My soul's within you." Every person acquainted with languages knows how much an idiom suffers by a literal translation. How beautiful, then, how tender and powerful, must those short expressions be, uttered, too, with a fervour of manner peculiar to a deeply-feeling people, when, even after a literal translation, they carry so much of their tenderness and energy into a language whose genius is cold when compared to the glowing beauty of the Irish.

Mavourneen dheelish, too, is only a short phrase, but coming warm and mellowed from Paddy's lips into the ear of his

colleen dhas, it is a perfect spell—a sweet murmur to which the *lenis susurrus* of the Hybla bees is, with all their honey, jarring discord. How tame is "My sweet darling," its literal translation, compared to its soft and lulling intonations. There is a dissolving, entrancing, beguiling, deluding, flattering, insinuating, coaxing, winning, inveigling, roguish, palavering, come-over-ing, comedhering, consenting, blarneying, killing, willing, charm in it, worth all the philtres that ever the gross knavery of a withered alchymist imposed upon the credulity of those who inhabit the other nations of the earth—for we don't read that these shrivelled philtre-mongers ever prospered in Ireland.

No, no—let Paddy alone. If he hates intensely, effectually, and *inquestingly*, he loves intensely, comprehensively, and gallantly. To love with power is a proof of a large soul; and to hate well is, according to the great moralist, a thing in itself to be loved. Ireland is, therefore, through all its sects, parties, and religions, an amicable nation. Their affections are indeed so vivid that they scruple not to kill each other with kindness; and we very much fear that the march of love and murder will not only keep pace with, but outstrip, the march of intellect.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & CO.
Edinburgh and London

45403

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 670 133 8